

ONE  
WORLD  
ONE  
MISSION

W. Richey Hogg

\$2.95

One World, One Mission  
by W. Richey Hogg

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*Three billion people . . . four billion people . . . six and a half billion people!*

These are the world census figures W. Richey Hogg foresees for the years 1962, 1980, and 2000. Our global population is exploding, and at the same time we are experiencing volcanic upheavals in social, political, and religious life. We can see the shape of the revolution, but what does it mean?

The author examines the complex situation from the vantage point of a Christian scholar, seeing it not as a singular phenomenon but as an overlarge ripple in the stream of history wherein God is working out his plan to bring us together in faith. Beginning with the commission to Israel in Old Testament times, Dr. Hogg traces the patterns that have evolved from the centuries-long growth in mission concept: the unity in spirit of the early church, the first thrusts sparked by the imperative to "go," the development of forms of co-operation between communions, the establishment of educational, medical, and other social ministries as arms of evangelism, and the new movement into total outreach — interdenominational, interracial, international — that we call ecumenical mission.

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WILLIAM RICHEY HOGG

*One World,  
One Mission*

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**THE CHURCH IN CHINA**

*from whom we are physically separated  
but with whom  
we are one in prayer and in the Spirit*

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## INTRODUCTION : EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS

To introduce and provide a point of reference for this book, we include here a letter describing the second century church in its mission in the world. Composed by an unknown Christian in response to an inquiry from a non-Christian, The Epistle to Diognetus was written about A.D. 140. Diognetus, a man of position and esteem—perhaps the teacher of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius—had been attracted by the Christians' love for one another, their unconcern with the world's judgments upon them, and their fearlessness in the face of death. This letter is evidence of the life and mission of the tiny, persecuted minority church in the second century Roman Empire. Not surprisingly, the letter also could apply to the life and witness of many Christians in the mid-twentieth century. It says, in part:

Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind by country, or by speech, or by customs. They do not dwell in cities of their own, or use a different language, or practice a peculiar life. . . . They are not champions of a human doctrine, as some men are. But while they dwell in Greek or barbarian cities according as each man's lot was cast, and follow the cus-

toms of the land in clothing and food, and other matters of daily life, yet the condition of citizenship which they exhibit is wonderful, and admittedly beyond all expectation.

They live in countries of their own, but simply as sojourners; they share the life of citizens, they endure the lot of foreigners; every foreign land is to them a fatherland, and every fatherland a foreign land. . . .

They exist in the flesh, but they live not after the flesh. They spend their existence upon earth, but their citizenship is in heaven. . . . They love all men, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown, and yet they are condemned; they are put to death, and yet they give proof of new life. They are poor, and yet make many rich; they lack everything, and yet in everything they abound. They are dishonoured, and their dishonour becomes their glory; they are reviled, and yet are vindicated. . . .

In a word, what the soul is in the body Christians are in the world. The soul is spread through all the members of the body; so are Christians through all the cities of the world. . . .

God Himself in very truth, the almighty and all-creating and invisible God, Himself from heaven planted among men and established in their hearts the Truth and the Word, the holy, incomprehensible Word, sending to men . . . his own son who is himself a king; He sent Him as God, He sent Him as man to men, He sent Him with the idea of saving, of persuading, not of forcing; for force is no part of the nature of God. He sent Him as inviting, not as pursuing man; He sent Him in love, not in judgement. For He will send Him in judgement; and who shall stand before His presence?

[Dost thou not see them] flung to the wild beasts, to make them deny their Lord, and yet unconquered? Dost thou not see that the more of them are punished, the more their numbers increase? These things look not like the achievements of man; they are the power of God; they are the proofs of His presence.

## chapter 1

### ONE WORLD—IN REVOLUTION

Our world has changed. Vastly different from that in which our parents grew up, it is still changing—and at a steadily increasing rate. Thus it requires constantly new appraisals of what man, who from generation to generation remains essentially the same, can do and must do in it.

For Christians committed to world mission this fact of change poses at least two insistent questions. What meaning have the changes in our world for the Christian mission? And in their midst how best can the mission be accomplished?

Let it be said at once—the mission is God's, not ours. The final outcome rests in God's hands, not ours. Yet he entrusts the mission to us. Therefore, as servants of God involved in the Christian mission, each of us should be certain that at no point is his understanding deficient, his labor in vain.

To understand the Christian mission today and our responsibilities for it, we need briefly to look at our world—specifically, at those factors in it that have a direct and major bearing upon the mission.

**A SHRINKING PLANET—AN EXPANDING WORLD**

Technological change, measured by the atomic explosion, is reducing our planet to neighborhood size. At the same time, the world's peoples are increasing so rapidly that we now refer uneasily to "the population explosion." Either one of these explosions, if uncontrolled, could produce chaos and misery on a scale that staggers the imagination. For good or for ill, they promise to change the life of mankind.

*The Atomic Explosion*

The atomic breakthrough has thrust the world suddenly onto the threshold of a new age. It fills the future with promise. Yet the mushroom cloud charges the years ahead with numbing horror—the threat of self-wrought extinction. Exciting, yet ominous, the future awaits.

The atomic explosion symbolizes a century and a half of striking scientific and technological advance. The rapidity with which technology has shrunk the planet, made the world physically one, and forced mankind to live in world community is unique.

In 1800 man traveled as he had for thousands of years—on horseback. Then, within 160 years, science and technology worked a revolution. The steam engine's invention led to the railroad. The steamship replaced the sailing vessel. Later, the automobile and airplane gave man a mobility never before known. In the 1930's air travel across continents and oceans became possible for millions. Now man has learned how to fly 2,000 miles per hour, send heavy satellites at 25,000 miles per hour into outer space,

and reach for the moon. Moreover, man can communicate instantly by voice with any part of the world.

There has never been a period like it. The scientific progress that has enabled man to girdle the globe with voice and flight, split the atom, and probe outer space has made all the world's people close neighbors. Yet millions refuse either to see or to believe that scientific technology has fashioned a world community. Herein lies one major cause for much of the world's turmoil and suffering in the mid-twentieth century.

### *The Population Explosion*

In the mid-twentieth century another explosion thunders around the world. Yearly its force increases. This is the expanding burst of world population. Each year more people are born than die, and today more and more of those who are born live to reach adult life. Famine control, eradication of disease, and medical care have made the difference.

In 1650 the world's population approximated 500 million persons. By 1850 population had doubled to 1 billion persons. By the late 1920's the world's population had doubled again to 2 billion people. By 1962 our population should reach 3 billion. By 1980 it may reach 4 billion. In the year 2000, only forty years from now, our earth's population is expected to approximate 6.5 billion. If the trend continues, and nothing now seems likely to reverse it, population will double again by 2050 to 13 billion.

Perspective may help to show its magnitude. To add .5 billion people to the world after 1650 took two centuries. To add 2.5 billion people (equal to the world's 1955 population) after 1980 should take only two decades.

In this explosion, the most rapidly growing peoples are those of the world's underdeveloped countries. Latin America, even now slightly more populous than North America, in the next four decades will more than triple in size. Asia and Africa will more than double. Asia alone will add 2.5 billion people to the world's population!

In underdeveloped countries, despite the declining death rate, the birth rate remains high. Why? When most children died before reaching adult life, many babies had to be born. Moreover, in these lands grown children still mean old age security for elderly parents—the more children, the more security. Attitudes producing a high birth rate change slowly.

The population explosion could bring destitution on a scale never before seen. Increasing populations in underdeveloped lands require new and steadily growing industrial capacity just to keep an already low standard of living from deteriorating further.

Fearing intolerable living conditions brought on by her burgeoning population, Japan acted decisively. In 1948, with 80 million people jammed into an area smaller than California, Japan foresaw a doubled population in thirty-two years! Accordingly, the Diet legalized abortion and sterilization and subsidized birth-control centers. Largely through abortions, Japan in a decade nearly halved its birth rate. Yet its population continues to increase.

In taking such drastic action, Japan probably represents the exception among Asian nations at the present time. In Latin America strong Roman Catholic influence suggests that nothing will be done there to curb the birth rate. Little if anything is being attempted in Africa.

To what does the population explosion point? More and more people will have to live on less and less land. Moreover, dwindling acreage will have to meet ever-increasing food needs. Unless food production can be multiplied, industrial production sharply increased, and atomic power made available for industry, decreasing living standards threaten most of the world's people. The problems of world community come to the fore.

### *The Population Explosion and The Christian Mission*

The population explosion means many things to the church. For one, it points to a growing task. The church's mission can never be judged by numbers alone. Yet the church in mission dare not overlook statistics and their meaning.

In 1960 Christians approximate 34 per cent of the world's population. In A.D. 2000, Christians are likely to number only 22 per cent. Although Christians may nearly double in number in the next forty years, they will constitute a steadily smaller proportion of mankind. Constantly increasing church membership in North America and even a tripling of nominal Christians by population growth in Latin America must not blind anyone to this decline of Christians in the world.

Conversely, non-Christians will be increasing steadily. In 1960 they approximate 2 billion. By the year 2000, non-Christians will probably number nearly 5 billion, the overwhelming majority of them Asians. The presence of more and more non-Christians in the world than ever before carries important meaning for the future of the Christian mission.

*An Added Dimension of Christian Mission*

The atomic and population explosions say much to the concerned Christian. Scientific progress, world community, procreation, and each individual life—all these are gifts from God. Man can acknowledge them as such and use each to the glory of God. Man also can misunderstand, ignore, or deny this fundamental reality and exploit these gifts for his own selfish interests. So perverted, they lead to man's degradation and destruction.

The church in its mission declares God's sovereignty over *all* life. Thus it must make clear that the gospel points to and requires the responsible use of each gift from God. The gospel does not offer individual salvation alone. It involves man responsibly under God with all others and all else in God's creation. To this dimension of its mission—so frequently forgotten—the church must constantly be recalled.

**ANCIENT LANDS—NEW NATIONS**

Americans and Canadians think of themselves as comprising young, dynamic nations. They have regarded Egypt, India, and China as ancient lands, remnant countries of once great civilizations. Yet overnight all this has changed. Although desperately poor, *these* and others are the *new* nations. Freed from direct or indirect Western domination, they look to the future with an optimism once characteristic of the West.

The West has largely achieved the material abundance the rest of the world seeks. Most of the non-Western world has been living, as it were, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is determined to make one gigantic leap into

the abundant life of the twentieth century. Other factors, too, enter the equation and profoundly affect the Christian mission. We shall turn to them before considering more specifically the pell-mell efforts of the world's people to achieve a better life.

### *Western Europe's Decline*

In the nineteenth century western Europe, it was believed, embodied the best in learning, scientific technology, and culture. She led the world. But in the mid-twentieth century she has fallen from her earlier pinnacle. In the three decades that embraced the two world wars the deep inner sickness of western European civilization became evident. On the world stage western Europe no longer holds pre-eminence. For the moment, the centers of power lie in eastern Europe and North America.

Western Europe's decline affects the Christian mission. In the nineteenth century many non-Westerners viewed Christianity favorably because it appeared to be Western. They viewed Western culture as superior to their own. They do so no longer! The non-Western nations have revived self-respect for their own cultures. They also believe that European civilization is in decline. Many assume that a religion—Christianity—linked with a declining culture is also in eclipse.

Many Europeans also believe that Christianity's day has passed. Roman Catholicism, strongest in Latin Europe, has found much of its once great strength ebbing there. European Protestantism faces the fact that the overwhelming majority of the intelligentsia and of the working classes stand outside its ministry.

*The Retreat of Colonialism*

A major factor affecting the Christian mission is the disappearing of the old colonialism associated with western European nations.

In the granting of independence to subject peoples the twelve years following World War II have no parallel. The United States gave the Philippines their independence. Dutch withdrawal from the East Indies made possible Indonesia. The end of major British rule in Asia brought forth as free nations India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, and the Federation of Malaya. Laos and Cambodia gained independence within what is now the French Overseas Community. Vietnam, although divided, was no longer under French control. In twelve years nearly 700 million people—one-fourth of mankind—emerged from Western colonial dominion. They became free and self-governing.

In Africa, until very recently, the pace had been much slower. Yet the winds of change now blow at gale force. Events unimaginable as late as 1957 have altered Africa's map, although Britain, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal still hold African colonies. The second post-war decade, 1955-1965, may prove decisive for colonialism in Africa.

For years Ethiopia and Liberia were Africa's two self-governing countries. Even by the end of World War II, they, and the Union of South Africa and Egypt, were the only independent nations in all Africa. Between 1951 and 1958 Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Ghana, and Guinea became free. In late 1958, after the DeGaulle Constitution was accepted, Madagascar and eleven former French colonies in Central and West Africa voted to become self-

governing autonomous states within the French Overseas Community. Belgium has agreed to the Congo's independence in 1960. By the time these words are read, Cameroun, Togoland, Somalia, and Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, will be free.

For most of the other African nations the timetable is not clear. But Africans are determined to be free—free of foreign colonial rule and of inferior status under white domination. European rule is on its way out.

### *The Legacy of Colonialism*

For most western Europeans the colonial era belongs to the past. In their thinking they have put colonialism behind. Not so for the peoples of Asia and Africa! Long memory of white domination is their most vivid political experience. They have known colonialism for four centuries. For them it is still a living and fearful thing.

Just enough Western colonialism remains to rank as a world political factor of the first magnitude. For non-Western peoples colonialism must be uprooted, fought, and eradicated. Anti-colonialism provides a common bond between Asia and Africa. The Russians did not produce it, but they ally themselves with it and use it. Even for newly free Asians and Africans, the specter of colonialism looms large. They fear resurgence of western European colonialism in any form—political, social, economic, or religious. Thus, India's prime minister condemns the "threat" of "atomic colonialism."

Citizens of the United States regard themselves as staunch opponents of colonialism. When the new nations link the United States with the colonial powers, many Americans

are baffled or angered. Let them understand. For North Americans colonialism means *physical possession* of a foreign land. For Asians and Africans colonialism means *domination*, or major influence of any kind, by people of white skin over people of color.<sup>1</sup>

To the emerging peoples of Asia and Africa, the freedom struggle is one to be rid of white control. The United States speaks grandly of freedom for all men. Yet in the world community the weakest chink in its moral armor is the inferior status imposed by the nine-tenths of its population that is white upon the one-tenth that is Negro. For emerging people white domination and colonialism are one.

The newer nations also observe that too often in the United Nations the United States' vote has favored its allies, imperial powers, over subject peoples. They note that the United States maintains authority in Panama, Guam, and Okinawa, for example. This indicates, they and others assert, the United States' acceptance of colonialism whenever and wherever it serves American purposes.

#### *The Christian Mission and Colonialism*

All these conditions influence the Christian mission. In Asia and Africa Christianity is linked with western European colonialism and is often contemptuously labeled "a white man's religion." Some condemn Christianity as a religious imperialism that destroys the national religion.

In areas where the Western overlord has left, the indig-

<sup>1</sup> China's role in provoking the 1959 Tibetan Revolt may begin to modify this. But a remote event publicized for a few months in newspapers means little compared with four centuries of personally inherited experience. Japan's "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" of the early 1940's is largely forgotten.

enous church may have more freedom to proclaim the gospel. Yet the presence of white Western missionaries and the use of Western funds by local churches place upon Christians in the new nations the stigma of colonial subjection. This is a bitter taunt. Among non-Western people of other faiths one dominant impression remains—Christianity is still part of the baggage of Western colonialism.

### *Nationalism and Resurgent Religions*

Colonialism's counterforce is nationalism. Nationalism can deify the state. This was the essence of Nazism in Hitler's Germany. Nationalism can also ally itself with traditional religions. The result is a powerful fusion of religion and national culture.

The most dynamic spiritual force today in Asia and Africa is nationalism. It opposes colonialism. It is undergirded by a renaissance of enthusiasm for the indigenous culture. Cohesive, it makes a diverse people one. For centuries many of the religions of Asia have been waning in vitality and influence. Confucianism and Taoism in China are dying. Secularism, especially among the youth and the educated, has spread everywhere. Any who think in traditional terms of Japan as Shintoist, Thailand as Buddhist, India as Hindu, and Egypt as Muslim would probably be shocked to see in these lands the power of irreligious secularism.

Yet today there is resurgence among the traditional religions. Many speak expansively of it. When they do, they need to be clear that they are not in actuality describing an upsurging nationalism that, for its own ends, deftly promotes religion. The pattern has been a familiar one in past

centuries. Those who must upbuild and unify a nation see in the people's traditional religion a cement for national solidarity. In recent years many national leaders, primarily to strengthen the nation's unity, have promoted the old religions.

### *The Christian Mission Confronts Resurgent Religions*

In Asia, and often in Africa, new nationalism demands that the nation's cultural heritage be strengthened. The result is a new status and vigor for the traditional religion. For a man to participate in its ceremonies shows patriotic pride. Conversely, for one to profess the Christian faith may seem to be evidence of non-interest in the new nation. To many of his fellow countrymen, the Christian's allegiance to a "foreign" and "Western" faith makes him an alien in his own homeland.

This merging of nationalism and religion has not been without effect. In more than one non-Western government there have been and are high officials who gave up Christianity and later espoused the national religion. Religious resurgence—or nationalism?

To avoid misunderstanding, let it be said again. There is resurgence among four of the non-Christian faiths—Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Shinto. It is important. In part it represents response to Christianity's challenge. In part it is recognition of a newly created world community.

Just as man can no longer live in isolation, his religions can no longer be sealed off from one another. In today's world mankind's religions are engaged in conversation with one another and face the challenge of an emerging scientific world culture. Thrust into this encounter, they

acquire self-awareness and new understanding. This totally new context confronts the world's major faiths with searching questions. Their struggle to give positive answers in itself may seem to be evidence of resurgence.

In the period ahead the Christian faith in mission will face an encounter with self-assertive non-Christian religions such as it has not seen since the first three centuries of its life and its later meeting with Islam. The confrontation will require scholarly study and insight, spiritual humility, and clarity of faith. Few Christians are prepared for this involvement. Yet it will affect the life of the church in mission for years to come. Indeed, this encounter may well shape at its deepest levels the history of the next ten centuries.

#### ONE WORLD—IN REVOLUTION

All nations have become interdependent. The United Nations symbolizes this fact. Its weaknesses testify that, although the world is physically one and interdependent, the world's peoples are as yet incapable of working in concert with one another. In short, men are ill-prepared for the kind of world community in which they must live.

To assume the possibility of isolation of any kind is a fatal delusion. Technology has pushed us relentlessly into the open. We are completely exposed to and involved with one another. Either we find a way to live and work together in world community, or we perish on a burn-pocked planet whose radioactive winds will envelop all people. Never before has the world's oneness been so apparent, never before have its diversities been so evident, and its glaring disparities been so clear.

*The Revolution of Rising Expectations*

The majority of the world's people are caught up in the most widespread revolution mankind has known. This "revolution of rising expectations" involves the determination of millions to move from what is to what ought to be. They are resolved to achieve living standards above the bare subsistence most of them now know.

The emerging peoples of the non-Western world want a better life! What the West has accomplished in four centuries, they are determined to achieve in a generation. The driving conviction that this is possible and the action that results make the revolution. Urgency and progress are its key words.

*Agrarian Societies*

Asia, Africa, and Latin America are overwhelmingly rural. On these continents tillable land provides a man's livelihood and his security. Yet millions there have never owned land of their own. They live as serfs, paying out an appalling percentage of the land's yield to landlords. Today they know that perpetual poverty and debt need not be their lot.

Convinced that they can destroy the oppressive landlord system—a remnant of feudalism—that binds them, these folk nevertheless face two giant obstacles. First, the great land holdings are not for sale. Second, if land could be bought, they would have nothing with which to obtain it. Millions confront an intolerable impasse. Revolt or government supervised land distribution seem to be the only alternatives. Other millions, as peasants, eke out a sub-

marginal existence on fragmented parcels of land. Allied with the serfs in poverty, they too demand change.

### *Rapid Industrialization and Social Change*

These same vast areas, holding the rapidly growing bulk of mankind, are underdeveloped or pre-industrial. They lack the machines and factories, as well as enough accumulated money to provide them and the skilled workers to operate them, that a modern nation needs to lift its people above poverty. To raise standards of living requires rapid industrialization. This is underway. Yet the very process creates a whole host of new social cancers.

In areas of rapid social change, men accustomed to closely knit village life move into cities and become low paid factory workers. Soon they are lost in the impersonal mass. Herded into filthy hovels, they live in a strange, bitter, and explosive environment. Even when workers' families accompany them, the situation may be intolerable. Living conditions for workers in the great new industrial complexes of Asia, Africa, and Latin America too often force people into a degrading and revolting animal-like existence. Morality and family life disintegrate.

Among the pre-industrial nations the next four decades will probably see a burst of development unparalleled in mankind's history. The goal: four centuries' progress in four decades! The availability of atomic energy could spell the difference between chaotic destitution and manageable improvement. Amidst this kind of rapid social change tensions and dislocations will be severe.

Except for the threat of atomic disaster, this revolutionary churning among the bulk of mankind constitutes the

world's greatest political reality. Only international co-operation and the sharing of atomic and technical knowledge can bring this revolution to a peaceful outcome. Scientists and technicians must be trained by the thousands. New capital sources must be formed in these lands, and additional capital must be made available from outside. Confronting this revolution, North American Christians must face the implications of a responsible Christian faith.

### *Communism and the Communist World*

Since World War II, one-fourth of mankind has become free and self-governing. In contrast, since World War I, one-third of mankind—from East Berlin to Vladivostok—has come under the domination of communism. But that ideology's impact is not limited to the Eurasian land mass. Within a generation communism has become a world-wide force.

The national embodiment of Communist theory has been Soviet Russia. Czarist Russia had a feudal, agrarian economy. With the Revolution of 1917, Russia underwent drastic change. Without reckoning the cost in human life, the Soviet government in four decades worked an industrial miracle.

By some measures of modern industrial stature, Russia stands second only to the United States. Despite the fearful toll in life and liberty, its single generation leap from feudalism to world political and industrial power has evoked awesome respect throughout the world.

Today's pre-industrial lands must make a similar transition. They look toward North America. Once a raw continent, it is now transformed. Yet observers in the new na-

tions note two major factors in North America's situation radically different from their own. North Americans had two centuries for relatively peaceful development. The new nations must industrialize in a generation. Moreover, North Americans settled a vast new land and were never under a landlord dominated agrarian economy. The new nations begin under that disadvantage.

Russia's background more closely parallels that of the new nations. The Russian living standard may not equal North America's, but it is far higher than their own. Moreover, it is attainable! New nationalism also sees Russia's commanding place in the international political arena. Among pre-industrial nations it is Russia's *accomplishment* that primarily excites hope and interest. Russia did it in this generation. The underdeveloped nations want similar results—fast!

In 1917 Lenin declared that Russia, having been in some ways dependent upon western European industrial nations, had been a colonial country. Immediately he pledged Russia's solidarity with the subject nations and reaffirmed communism's stanch opposition to imperialism. Russia has hammered on this theme ever since.

Lenin also insisted that communism encourage nationalism in colonial nations to hasten their independence and, he added quietly, their ultimate attraction into the Communist orbit. Regardless, for millions the Communist idea suggests anticolonialism as well as social change, better and more equitable conditions for workers, industrialization, and national economic improvement.

To many in pre-industrial countries seeking change, communism appeals. Russia shows that it works. Small wonder

that Asia and Africa watch China so intently. They want to see whether communism can produce the same miracle in Asia.

### *Communism—Alternative to Christianity*

To the average man caught up in the “revolution of rising expectations,” communism explains, supports, and promises the success of that revolution. For those who have lost faith in the traditional religions, the Communist idea offers a new faith. Solidly aligned against traditional oppressors, it brings hope.

Christianity, a religious faith and not a political power movement, in the eyes of many suffers by comparison. Communism appears primarily as a rapid, effective way to move from a backward, agrarian economy into an industrial one. Christianity offers no political program for change.

As John C. Bennett has shown, the Christian faith in such situations may be involved in a curious irony. In pre-industrial countries the gospel has awakened the consciences of many Christians. Nurtured in the Judaic-Christian prophetic faith, they wholeheartedly seek the justice and human rights that are also the goal of the “revolution of rising expectations.” Yet too often such Christians find their political choices limited. They can support either a party of privilege that would maintain things as they are, or the Communist Party that seems to be working to improve local conditions. In such cases the man with an informed Christian conscience faces a bitter dilemma. He wants change, but not communism. What can he do?

Until recently the church has given little attention to this problem. Yet an aroused conscience with social con-

cern must express itself through appropriate political channels. When such do not exist, earnest Christian faith may be frustrated or subverted. For one so caught there are no pat answers. Herein lies part of the enormous significance of the World Council of Churches' research and study conferences in Asia, Africa, and Latin America on Christian Responsibility in Areas of Rapid Social Change.

#### ANTI-WESTERNISM AND COLOR

By and large, Westerners are convinced that they have bestowed largesse upon the non-Western world. In the colonial period the West gave sound government, railways, and the benefits of Western education. Today it gives military help, technical assistance, and economic aid. It provides a huge market for Japanese goods, Indian and African minerals, and Middle Eastern oil. All this benefits non-Western peoples.

Should not non-Westerners be appropriately grateful for all the help they have received? Behind that question stands a common Western assumption—superior technology and culture require the West to be generous. An earlier generation designated the same attitude *noblesse oblige* or “the white man’s burden.” Underlying all this is the widespread, but false, Western belief that advanced technology has resulted from superior racial stock.

A corollary assumption has been that in improving their economic status, non-Western people would conform closely to Western standards. The Westerner takes for granted the superiority of all things Western. This attitude in its obvious manifestations and in its more subtle outcroppings has long embittered non-Westerners. They make a distinction

between scientific technology and Western culture. Unfortunately, few North Americans, or Europeans, know how little admiration non-Western people hold for the culture of the West.

At the core of anti-Western feeling is the thoroughgoing rejection of all Western assumption of superiority. *No-blesse oblige* at its best can achieve much good. Yet it involves a relationship between a superior and an inferior person. This makes it intolerable.

### *Color and Caste*

For Asians and Africans the "color bar," or the glance, gesture, or tone that barely disguise an assumption of white superiority, sear the soul. Almost without exception across Negro Africa, every relationship between Negroes and whites presupposes Negro inferiority. Small wonder that anti-Western feeling is in strong tide.

In the bond of color Asians and Africans feel close kinship with the American Negro. Their newspapers cover any unfortunate racial incident in the United States. To them, beatings, castrations, Little Rocks are but varied symptoms of the white Western "incurable disease." Those who deny the dignity and worth of the man of color stir up bitter antipathy in Asians and Africans.

Non-Westerners looking at India may deplore its caste practices. Yet they admit caste is required by Hinduism. When they turn to the United States, they see in its religious and political foundations—the Bible, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution—no such sanction for racial discrimination. Democracy and Christianity, as they understand them, condemn color discrimination. In

their eyes, Americans refuse to practice what they preach. The difference between American profession and practice is damning.

White superiority, and in particular the treatment and status of people of color in the United States of America and the Union of South Africa, have produced throughout the non-Western world a powerful negative witness against the Christian gospel. So great is its impact that it undercuts the Christian world mission far more effectively than could an overseas army of atheists, equal in size to the entire Christian missionary force and dedicated to preaching pure atheism.

### *Our One World*

We are one world—in revolution. The phrase may seem self-contradictory. The revolution, emphasizing our disparities and separation, seems to deny our oneness. Yet the very attempt to act in separation is transmuted by the realities of our age into an affirmation of our inescapable oneness. This is the new situation in our world. Our attempts to deny or to affirm it, and the resulting confused responses, disclose the suddenness with which world community has come upon us and our lack of preparation for it. This is the world to which the church in our generation is called in mission.

## chapter 2

### GOD'S PEOPLE—GOD'S INSTRUMENT IN THE WORLD

**T**he church always faces two great realities.

It must look steadily at the world in which it lives and to which it is called in mission. It must understand that world and the ever-shifting tides in it that motivate men.

Of prior importance, the church with steadfast devotion must fix its eyes on Him who calls it into mission. Unless it does so, it can neither fulfill its ministry in and to the world, nor can it stand against those forces that would destroy it. Thus the church must turn again and again to the Bible. There, in the prime record of God's self-disclosure to his people, it can discover the ever-new meaning of God's purpose for his people.

#### ISRAEL FOR GOD

In the Old Testament Israel is the instrument of God's purpose. God made a covenant with the ancient Jews. He initiated a relationship by which, in a special way, they be-

came his people. He freed them from bondage and offered them their salvation. In turn, they agreed to serve his holy and sovereign purpose.

### *The Covenant*

Through Moses on Mount Sinai came God's covenant with Israel:

Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. (Exodus 19:5-6.)

The covenant focused the Jews' attention upon Israel as a nation under Jehovah and upon themselves as a chosen people—the people of God. God promised that, in faithful witness to his will, Israel should find its fulfillment. The chosen people existed to serve God's purpose in the world.

### *A Chosen People*

The idea of a chosen people is distasteful to many. "Why," someone asks, "should God choose the Jews for special privilege?" The very question betrays the asker. He has failed to see what God's election or choice means.

Many people in ancient Israel committed the same error and assumed that God's choice made them superior to others. This was their undoing. As the Bible shows, God's choice or election is never to privilege. It is always to service. Covenant obedience confers no worldly status. It requires only faithful response to God's will. God covenanted with the Jews so that through their very weakness, as it were, he might show forth the power and purpose of his redemptive love. Israel was chosen for a mission.

## ISRAEL FOR THE WORLD

In time the prophets were enabled to see that, although God had covenanted with Israel alone, his sovereignty extended over every nation. There is one God, the creator and sustainer of the universe. As maker of all men, he is God of all men. As Lord of all, he has a place and purpose for every people. As this became clear to the ancient Hebrews, they gave voice to it in songs of praise.

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. For dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. (Psalm 22:27-28.)

Then came to Israel a new realization: those with whom God had covenanted bore a responsibility toward those outside the covenant. God had made himself known to Israel. Through Israel others also could come to know and praise Jehovah (Isaiah 2:2-3; Jeremiah 3:17).

God, who created the earth and the families of men, was never Israel's exclusive possession. He is Lord of all mankind (Isaiah 45:20-23). He covenanted with Israel for a mighty purpose—to make himself known to all men.

"I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness." (Isaiah 42:6-7.)

"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6.)

What a commission! Through the prophet came God's Word to a scattered group of Jews. Those about them regarded the Jews as uncultured rustics. Among the world's millions they were a tiny minority. Yet to them, the people of the covenant, God entrusted a mission to the world.

#### ISRAEL'S PURIFICATION FOR COSTLY MISSION

Among a few, like the Pharisees (cf. Matthew 23:15), there was an active attempt to make converts. But, practically speaking, there was no Jewish missionary outreach. Repeatedly Israel misunderstood and broke its covenant. It flaunted the covenant as a mark of privilege. In so doing it denied the very purpose of the relationship. Its disobedience brought judgment. Judgment produced repentance. Yet unfaithfulness continued, and few heeded the prophets' denunciation of Israel's national sin.

#### *The Remnant*

Indeed, so frequent became Israel's disobedience and so few there were who remained faithful that the prophets proclaimed a new message. Only the faithful few, a remnant, would survive God's judgment. Henceforth, it would be through the faith of individuals—a small loyal community within the nation—that the covenant purpose would be worked out. Elijah, Amos, Micah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and others proclaimed the role of the faithful remnant.

#### *The Exile*

Israel's exile in the sixth century B.C. was bitter. To preserve their faith in an alien land, the Jews lived in clannish isolation. Strict observance of the law, prohibition of inter-

marriage, and a suspicion of all non-Jewish religions developed a highly exclusive strain in Judaism. This helped to preserve Israel's faith to herself, of course. Yet on the other hand, it diverted Israel's attention from the universality of God's sovereignty and the place of the covenant people in his purpose.

### *The Servant*

A mission to the world requires an especially qualified agent. Isaiah describes the agent of God's mission as a servant. The description appears in four passages: Isaiah 42: 1-9; 49:1-6; 50:4-11; 52:13 to 53:12. Do these refer to Israel, to the remnant, or to an individual person? Evidence exists for each possibility, and, indeed, the prophet may have had all three in mind.

The fundamental and important meaning of those passages, and especially Isaiah 53, is unmistakable. The agent of God's mission appears in the form of a servant. The servant, in fulfilling the divine will and purpose, brings to the world its salvation. The servant fulfills his commission only through manifesting a love like that of God himself; a love that surpasses all other love.

Such love heals. It achieves its purpose through redemptive suffering. It knows no exultation, worldly power, or acclaim. Rather in humble service it reaches out to embrace all men and all conditions of men.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5.)

## JONAH AND ISRAEL'S MISSION

The high call to mission went unheeded by the Jews. In their disobedience, the Word of God came to them through Jonah. The writer of the Book of Jonah—the name came to symbolize Israel—had rare and keen insight into the mission to which God had called Israel. He understood the spirit in which it was to be fulfilled.

Although many regard the Book of Jonah as a factual account—and this interpretation does not change its essential message—the writer holds that the overwhelming evidence of a century's biblical scholarship requires another view. We mistake the purpose of the Book of Jonah, we do its writer, a prophet of God, a grave injustice, when we assume it to be literal history. Jonah is no more a factual account of specific events than is our Lord's parable of the pearl of great price. Yet Jonah is true just as that parable is true. Indeed, Jonah was written for Israel *as a parable*. Jonah was meant to provide insight and produce action. Jonah himself is Israel! The writer hoped that when this finally struck home, Israel would see it both as judgment and as call to mission.

The main outline of the story is familiar. God calls Jonah, the unwilling missionary, to go to a pagan people. Although resisting God's call and reluctant, he was finally driven to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. What more hopeless place for a mission! Yet there God required a missionary, and in Nineveh Jonah preached. Marvelous to say, the people of Nineveh repented. As a result, God relented and did not visit upon Nineveh the punishment decreed for it.

In that moment, Jonah, God's chosen missionary, dis-

played the depth of his own sin. He was angry because God had not punished Nineveh with what, in Jonah's eyes, were its just deserts. God had called Jonah into mission. Through his preaching a whole people had been turned to God. Yet in the very accomplishment of the mission, God's human servant came under divine judgment. As the account ends, God confronts Jonah to make plain the fact that he, the missionary, is more to be pitied, stands more in need of forgiveness, than Nineveh.

Thus, in the pre-Christian era it was clear that God's missionary call could be rejected, or accepted only grudgingly. It was apparent that the missionary himself could deny in his own heart the very message he proclaimed. God can use even a hardhearted, sinful man. But woe to that missionary, subject as man to all the frailties of humankind, who assumes that he—the message bearer—finds greater favor in God's sight than those to whom he goes.

In the old covenant there were those sensitively aware of God's purpose. They saw in Israel's disobedience the need for God to make a new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-33). In the fullness of time it came. The new covenant was Jesus Christ.

#### THE NEW COMMUNITY AND THE KINGDOM

Jesus Christ reconstituted the people of God as the instrument of God's purpose. In the Old Testament Israel is God's people—intended for mission. In the New Testament the church, the new Israel, assumes that mission. The contrast between the two is a contrast between a latent and a living mission.

*The Little Flock*

Jesus Christ gathered a little community with a new relationship to God. He chose a band of disciples, taught them, and sent them out to preach and bear witness. Those who listened to the message accepted or rejected the new life in the kingdom of God that was declared.<sup>1</sup> Those who accepted became the followers of the Master. He addressed them as the "little flock."

In the Old Testament "the flock" represents only the remnant. Our Lord spoke of himself as the shepherd (Mark 14:27, John 10:11). The little flock, then, gathered round its shepherd, became the faithful remnant, the obedient servant of God. Drawn from Israel, it did not regard itself at the outset as distinct from Israel. It was the new community that became the church of Christ.

*The Kingdom of God*

The heart of Jesus' preaching was the kingdom of God. That kingdom exists where God's sovereignty is wholly accepted, where his kingly rule holds sway. One can receive it as a gift. One can enter it. But one does not build it. The kingdom is God's. Accordingly, our Lord taught his disciples to pray that God's kingdom might come and that in it God's will might be done on earth even as it is in heaven.

The kingdom was at hand because it was already present in Jesus Christ. In him both God's sovereign rule and full, loving response to it were manifest. In him a new age had dawned. He confronted men with a choice. Would they ac-

<sup>1</sup> The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11) describe the character of life lived in this new dimension.

cept and enter the kingdom, receive its new life and be caught up in the triumph of God's purpose? Or would they reject it?

The kingdom was present. Yet its full and final disclosure, Jesus made plain, lies in the future. Therein was both certainty and hope. One could enter the kingdom and have a foretaste of its life. One could become its herald. But the final coming of the kingdom—the ultimate disclosure of God's triumph—remains in the future.

#### JESUS CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

Three related events at the heart of the gospel—the crucifixion, the resurrection, and Pentecost—disclose the meaning of Jesus Christ for God's people as the instrument of God's purpose in the world.

##### *The Crucifixion*

The crucifixion nearly destroyed the newly gathered community. Peter had denied knowing Jesus. Events leading up to Calvary caused his disciples, fearful and confused, to forsake him and flee. The crucifixion plunged them into despair. Everything their Master embodied, it seemed, had died with him.

Utterly disconsolate, the disciples could only assume that their faith had been misplaced. God had not, then, really been in Jesus Christ. They had been deluded. The cross crushed their faith and their hope. How forlorn their confession sounds: ". . . we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. . . ." (Luke 24:21.) He to whom they had pledged their lives was dead, condemned and crucified before all men.

*The Resurrection*

All this changed in the resurrection. God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. To those who had known him the Risen Lord appeared. In the crucifixion the apostles' faith became meaningless. Confronted by the Risen Lord, their faith was made perfect. Despair became joy.

In the Risen Lord the disciples saw that the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 was the Messiah in their midst. In him they saw God's triumphant kingdom.

God's love embodied in life had brought neither esteem nor privilege. Some it attracted. Others it repelled. To many the Lord's life of obedient service seemed good but powerless. "Realistic" men could say the shame and humiliation of the cross were undeserved, but that in this world, after all, loving kindness, so often trampled upon, may be folly.

Yet with the eye of faith, the apostles saw in the resurrection a decisive truth. Men ignore it to their peril. In this world, response to God's love may not spare one from—indeed, may bring—pain, trial, or death. But this humble, serving love, apparently so easily destroyed by evil might, is made triumphant over the world through God's resurrecting power. The only victory over sin and death belongs to that obedience that itself is response to God's love. In God's eternal kingdom it lives. This is the victory that overcomes the world.

The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ make plain God's sovereign purpose. Evil, sin, and death do not have the final word in his world. He rules over them. They are subject to his will. Man's future lies only in God's hands.

The resurrection transformed the new community's feeble faith into a white hot flame. God *was* in Christ. In him the new age of God's triumphant kingdom has broken in upon men. Through faithful lives it can be disclosed, but its power does not depend upon human strength. In God's hands the future is sure.

Resurrection faith also saw that the day is coming when, in God's providence, life as it has been known on this earth will come to an end. In that moment—the Day of the Lord—God's kingdom will be fully revealed in all its power and glory. God's victorious sovereignty will be disclosed. To this one end, all history is moving. To this consummation, God's people look forward in hope.

### *Pentecost*

Jesus Christ's presence among men was brief. During his earthly ministry, he gathered a community that became the church. To it he promised that when he had left its sight, God the Father would send it another Counselor—the Spirit—to remain with it and empower it (John 14:16-17. Cf. Acts 1:6-10). To the church on Pentecost ("the fiftieth day") God gave his gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).

In the Old Testament the presence of God's Spirit had seemed limited to a few prophets. In the church God gave the Spirit to the whole people—to the *laity*.<sup>1</sup> In the Spirit they were one people. In the Spirit they discovered God's power working in and through them.

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek *laos*, meaning "people," comes the word "laity." Tragically, it now has negative overtones meaning "not ordained" or "uninitiated." The original use of the word as *the people* of God bursts with positive content. The clergy are thus also part of the laity!

The church became a community of the Spirit. It regarded the Spirit as one with the Father and the Son. Yet it distinguished the Spirit from both. The Spirit, it believed, had dwelt in Jesus Christ. Indeed, it often identified the Holy Spirit with the Spirit of the Risen and Living Lord. The Spirit thrust the church into mission. The Spirit's presence and power equipped the church for mission and transformed its witness into the living Word of God.

#### THE CHURCH FOR THE WORLD

Jesus Christ was the Messiah, the one to redeem Israel. In consequence, the early church saw itself as the new Israel, the true Israel. It had inherited the promises of the old covenant and the mission disclosed to its people.

In Jesus Christ God had established a new covenant.<sup>1</sup> Thus, as inheritor of the old covenant and witness to the new, the church lives to carry forward God's redemptive purpose. Its Lord, the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, in the final hour of his obedience was Israel. In that moment when he stood alone, he *was* the faithful remnant. He, who to fulfill God's purpose for the world embodied the Suffering Servant, thereby defined the mission of those who claim his name. Isaiah 53 describes the mission of the church!

The Christian mission, then, is grounded in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is spreading the goods news of the Father's love, and the total obedient response of the covenant people of God to this good news. This witness and response are empowered by the Holy Spirit. The mission is God's. Its agents are his faithful people.

<sup>1</sup> "Covenant" is also translated "testament." Thus come the designations Old Testament and New Testament.

## chapter 3

### THE MISSION AND UNITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The word “mission” appears nowhere in the English Bible. Yet mission is at the very center of biblical faith. The word comes from a Latin verb meaning “to send.” Mission means a sending. A missionary is one who is sent. In the Greek New Testament the word *apostolos*, translated in English as “apostle,” appears frequently and refers to one who is sent. Apostle and missionary are identical in meaning and can be used interchangeably, although English usage generally favors the word missionary as the more common term.

Mission permeates the New Testament. When, for example in John 17:18, our Lord says, “As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world,” the Greek verbs in the text read literally, “As thou didst *apostle* me into the world, so I have *apostled* them into the world.” Jesus is described as God’s apostle (Hebrews 3:1). He in turn sent his followers into the world. Thus, the church is a *sent* body. It is apostolic or missionary.

## MISSION

From the outset the church was missionary. Paul wrote missionary letters to the young churches. Missionary expansion provided the matrix from which came the Four Gospels. The New Testament relates the history of a people—the church—who knew a faith that no man can contain unto himself. He alone has received the gospel who knows it must be spread abroad. Because the gospel is God's truth about himself, it belongs to all men.

The New Testament's pages do not fail to record the difficulties in this outreach. In gathering men of all kinds in every nation, the church faced grave problems in its life, discipline, and unity (cf. I Corinthians 1:10-17). Yet it reached ever outward, believing that in the Spirit those strains could be met and overcome.

*The Church in the Book of Acts*

The Book of Acts depicts the life of the early church in mission. After Pentecost the church proclaimed the gospel in Jerusalem (Acts 2-7). When Stephen preached and was stoned, persecution broke out. Many of the Lord's followers scattered into Judea and Samaria where they spread the gospel (Acts 8). The account next describes the conversion of Saul who later became Paul (Acts 9). Then Peter, called by the Gentile centurion Cornelius and impelled by the Holy Spirit, went to him and instructed him in the gospel. To his amazement, Peter discovered that, living in the Spirit, the people of God should and would include the Gentiles (Acts 10).

Almost as if by accident some of the Christians scattered

by the persecution began in Antioch to speak of the gospel to the Greeks—to non-Jews. As a result, a flourishing Gentile church sprang up in that city. For a year Barnabas and Saul lived there, instructing the people in the faith (Acts 11).

Sometime later the congregation in Antioch, while at worship, was led by the Holy Spirit to call Saul (now Paul) and Barnabas into a mission (Acts 13:1-4). Antioch became the launching site for the Gentile mission, and there began Paul's famous missionary journeys. To them the remainder of the Book of Acts is devoted.

### *Gentile Converts*

The church in Jerusalem had not intended to seek out or admit Gentiles. Peter enabled it to see that Gentiles, too, could belong to the community of the Spirit. They were admitted. Then came a real question. Should Gentile converts be circumcised and observe kosher food laws? (Acts 15:5). In a word—did Gentile converts have to become Jewish Christians? Some believed that they did.

Against this position, in all its variations, Paul stood firm. A Jew of the Jews, he yet saw that in Jesus Christ the law had been fulfilled. It had been replaced by full freedom, the freedom of the man who lives by faith in obedient response to the love of God. Men, whether Jews or Greeks, are saved neither by ritual ceremonies nor by works, but by faith (cf. Romans 3:28-31; Galatians 3:26-28). Several points were at issue, but most important was the freedom of the gospel. To Paul went the victory. This shaped the whole future of the church and freed it to fulfill its mission in all the world.

*The Scope of the Mission*

The sovereignty of him who created the heavens and the earth extends over those who acknowledge him, those who do not know him, and those who reject him. God rules over every sphere of life. Men blaspheme and are guilty of idolatry when they assume or act as if God were sovereign only over the church and not over economic and political life. God's sovereignty is absolute. All man's life and his relations with others, all history, resides in God's hands. This Israel's prophets had seen and declared.

The Father's dominion defines the Son's Lordship. Jesus Christ's life and ministry were limited to a particular time, place, and people. Yet as God's Son, as the Father's apostle—the word means not only one who is sent, but also one in whom has been invested the ambassador's full authority to represent the sender—his Lordship cannot, dare not, be limited by time, race, or geography.

Herein does God's *apostled* Son receive Lordship over all life. He is Lord of the church and of those outside the church. He is Lord of farm and factory, Lord of the races, and Lord of the nations. He lived his life not for himself but for others—for all men. So too his church exists not for itself alone, but for others—for those outside the church and for all those areas of life where God's sovereignty is unknown or denied.

Jesus Christ is *The Apostle*, God's missionary. He is at the center of history and at the heart of the mission. He is the key to both. The early church did not immediately grasp the profound change that had come about for its own life, and for that of the world, in the death and resurrection

of its Lord. As Messiah, as Lord, as God Incarnate, Jesus Christ was God's Word not only to Israel, but also to the whole world. To the new Israel was committed the task of bearing this Word to the world.

This revelation of God's purpose came alive in the early church through the work of the Holy Spirit. The carrying out of the mission and its unimagined fruits in our day testify anew to God's working in history through the instrument of his people in mission.

### *The Church in Mission*

The church is sent. It is *apostled*. It lives in mission until the end of time. Because the church now exists throughout the world, some have concluded that the day of *missions*—men's efforts to fulfill the mission—is past. Quite the contrary! God's mission can now be carried forward more effectively on all fronts, and by all, than ever before. The apostle's commission ends only when he who gave it declares the mission accomplished.

The mission is no discretionary option. The moment the church so assumes or acts, it denies its own nature. Because in the purpose of God it has been *apostled* by its Lord, the church must always be in mission. Mission is its life. Emil Brunner put it well: "The church exists by mission as fire exists by burning."

Nor is the mission fulfilled when a church reaches out to those in its immediate vicinity or its nation. This is one dimension of the mission, but God's purpose relates to all men everywhere. In its covenant with God the church undertakes to proclaim his Word to the ends of the earth.

Small wonder that the church has found so meaningful the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

The Christian always bears a responsibility for his neighbor, but we still ask the lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29.) The answer remains the same. Jesus showed that the neighbor is one who stands in need as well as one who responds to that need. Significantly, to his Jewish hearers, he defined the responding neighbor not as the man next door or across the street, but as the despised Samaritan—a man of another people and nation.

In today's world made physically one, the New Testament understanding of the neighbor should be clear to all. The earth's people comprise our neighbors. To share with the neighbor near at hand to the exclusion of the neighbor far away is to deny God's love and purpose. Who is the neighbor to whom God calls the church?

### UNITY

The New Testament also speaks of the unity of the Body of Christ, of the church. Indeed, in its pages, the theme of mission and unity conjoined sounds clear.

The early church knew unity in the Spirit. Jesus Christ had once been its visible center. After the ascension the Holy Spirit became the empowering presence in which the unity of the body was maintained. The church lives and fulfills its mission as a community of the Spirit.

The Spirit indwells the church, and the church lives in the Spirit. What Jesus Christ meant to his disciples, the Holy Spirit means to the church. The church listens intently for the Spirit's guiding. It denies the Spirit's leading

at its own peril. The church is one in the Spirit of God, else it is not the church.

### *The Unity of the Body*

Paul described the church as a body in which dwells the Spirit (I Corinthians 12). When eyes, legs, hands, mind, and heart function together as co-ordinate parts of one human body, they provide it with an incredibly vast range of capabilities. Yet the body with all its parts is one and is under the direction of one spirit.

Similarly, the church is diverse, yet one. Upon its members the Spirit bestows different gifts—preaching, teaching, healing, and other talents. No gift is greater than another. These varied functions God intends for the upbuilding of the common body. Their diversity enables the members to help one another and in unity to show forth the glory of God. The diversity, the unity, the strength of the body are the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Paul's discourse on the church's unity has an immediate sequel. Love, he says, stands above all those diverse gifts that enrich the church's unity. That unity comes from God. Thus its essence is love—love that is like God's love. This is the love described in the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians.

To dwell in the Spirit, or to be in the church, means that one's life takes on a particular character. The fruits of the Spirit are "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22). These are the hallmarks of unity within the Body of Christ.

In the people of God dwells one Spirit. They, in their

common redemption and in the Spirit, are one. They may deny this. They may even make it impossible for the world to see this unity. But it is there. It is God's gift to his church.

### *Reconciling Unity*

Paul's other major statement on the church's unity appears in the fourth chapter of Ephesians. As Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—God, he says, is one. God has one church. The church is one in its faith, baptism, and hope. This God-given unity has as its purpose the upbuilding in love of the whole body.

In the unity of love every barrier is overcome. Could Jew and Gentile, separated for centuries, sit and break bread together? The Spirit led the church into this new unity at Christ's table. The wall between slave and free men crumbled. In that love incarnated in Christ, the substance of the unity of his people, every division of mankind is overcome.

When the church displays man's reconciliation to man, it discloses to the world God's purpose. When rich men and poor men, black men and white men, Germans, Chinese, Russians, Indians, Africans, Latin Americans, and North Americans—with all their differences—make visible in the church their unity in the Spirit, they declare to mankind God's will. When the people of God, insensitive to this unity, deny it and hide it from the world, they sin against God. They forsake his purpose.

### *Unity for Mission*

The New Testament emphasizes this oneness in many ways. For example, further insight into the nature and purpose of the unity of God's people comes from the Gospel of

John. The entire seventeenth chapter records the prayer of Jesus Christ, offered just before his betrayal, for his church.

I do not pray for these only, but also for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. The glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me. (John 17:20-23.)

In these words at least two important considerations are evident. First, our Lord prayed that his followers, his church, might know the same kind of unity as that which existed between him and his Father. In Father and Son were two wills in perfect accord.<sup>1</sup> Mutual respect and love bound those two wills together. Here was unity in the Spirit. The binding tie was love. Yet had it not been visibly embodied in life and action, it would have been unknown.

Second, Jesus Christ prayed for this unity to endow the mission of his church with convincing power. He prayed that his followers could "become perfectly one" so that in the church's unity the non-believing world could see God's reconciling power. In that unity the world could see that God loves *all* men as he loved Jesus Christ.

The unity of the church for which our Lord prayed—and this was before any denominations existed—declares to the world the power of God's love to overcome all mankind's divisions: race, nationality, sex, status, and religion. Jesus

<sup>1</sup> One recalls the words in Gethsemane: ". . . nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matthew 26:39.)

Christ prayed for unity "that the world may believe." He makes mission and unity inseparable.

Thus the church in its mission exists to show forth the divine power of reconciliation, reconciliation in Christ, and with it the peace of God that passes all understanding. When one white, middle class North American helps his North American counterpart to believe in the gospel, he moves worthily within *one* dimension of the mission.

There is another dimension. In the church—in the unity of the Body of Christ—*all* barriers that divide men are overcome. The church gathers into its life all mankind's diversities. Its rich unity bears witness to the all-encompassing Lordship of him who commissions the church.

In this other dimension of its mission, the church must constantly reach across every line that divides man from man and people from people. It must do this to the humanly visible limits of God's sovereignty—to the uttermost parts of the earth. From every corner of the world where the church exists, God calls out his church and sends it forth across all the divisions of mankind. Only thus—in the missions of men—is God's mission fulfilled.

## chapter 4

### CHRISTIANITY—A WORLD FAITH

**G**ospel" means good news—good news about God. The gospel is God's disclosure of himself and his love. It is the truth about God embodied in a life.

The first Christians supposed that the gospel was meant only for the Jews. But the Holy Spirit guided the early church to see that the gospel must reach all men. It came to one people through one person. Yet as the one truth above all truths, it had to be taken to every nation. All men, everywhere and at all times, must be enabled to know Jesus Christ. But how shall they know him? Only those to whom the good news has come can spread it abroad. In this Spirit-born conviction, the mission began.

Always there have been those for whom this truth of mission, implicit in the gospel, was either not evident or conveniently ignored. Yet always there were those for whom it became a divine imperative. Through them—first Paul, then Gregory, later Martin of Tours, Patrick, and Boniface; next the Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits; finally whole churches—the mission was carried forward.

In our time many speak of world Christian community. Today, with three or four minor exceptions, the Christian church is found in every land around the world. Pause to reflect. No other of the world's great religions is planted so widely and is being spread by and among so many peoples. In its extent and nature Christianity's recent and rapid spread around the globe is unique.

Yet Christianity has not always been global. Indeed, until about four hundred years ago, Christianity was, practically speaking, a European faith. How did it so quickly become a world-wide faith?

#### THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The answer, in part, resides in the sixteenth century—a time of remarkable physical, intellectual, and religious vigor among European peoples. The Renaissance was at its height. Copernicus began modern astronomy. Luther, Calvin, and others gave birth to the Protestant Reformation. That century's impulses still influence our world.

The dawn of the sixteenth century also brought the voyages of discovery. Europeans wanted to reach Asia, for its spices, silks, and jewels proved a great lure. In 1492 Columbus sailed westward across the Atlantic—for India. In 1498 Vasco de Gama reached India by sailing around Africa. Other European explorers soon probed the whole world. European trade, culture, and imperial rule followed.

#### ROMAN CATHOLIC OUTREACH

The sixteenth century monarchs of Spain and Portugal, as part of their Christian duty, saw to it that Christianity went with their conquering forces. They believed, too, that

Christianity provided a civilizing and stabilizing force among newly subject peoples. Thus was spread the faith of the Roman Catholic Church.

### *The New World*

Roman Catholic missionaries from Spain and Portugal soon were at work in coastal cities and remote areas of North and South America. Later the French spread widely through North America. On occasion the missionaries accompanied the conquerors. At other times the missionaries pushed first into new territories. By the seventeenth century the Roman Catholic Church was planted in the new world.

### *Asia*

The discovery of the Western Hemisphere was an accident. Asia had been the primary goal; and once it was reached, traders and missionary monks went forward together. Missionaries, supported by the crown, won Asians to the faith. Francis Xavier, the great pioneering Jesuit, helped to spread Christianity in India, Ceylon, the East Indies, and Japan. The monastic orders provided Roman Catholicism's missionary outreach.

### *Africa*

While their missions in Asia and the Americas were achieving striking results, Roman Catholic missionaries made limited attempts to evangelize Africa. The first major Catholic thrust into Negro Africa came in the final decades of the nineteenth century when European powers were dividing Africa south of the Sahara among themselves. Thenceforth, the Roman Catholic Church grew rapidly.

*Roman Catholicism Today*

Today the Roman Catholic Church is a well organized world-wide body, the largest of all Christian churches. Except in Europe, it is growing steadily—in some cases, spectacularly. In Canada Roman Catholics number approximately six and one-half million and represent nearly half the population. In the United States Roman Catholics number more than 39 million and are growing. Although only half as large as the combined Protestant churches, the Roman Catholic Church is the largest church in the United States. Latin America is nominally Roman Catholic, and the faith is expanding in Asia and Africa.

In this world outreach, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States has been achieving steadily greater importance. Its contribution of missionaries (about 5 per cent of the total) is still modest, but it provides strong financial support.

Throughout the world the Roman Catholic Church embraces millions. Probably 480 million is a good estimate. Membership figures include all baptized into the faith. This contrasts with the practice of Protestant denominations in North America. These record only persons received into and maintained in actual church membership.

*The Propaganda*

The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, usually referred to by Roman Catholics as the Propaganda, oversees Roman Catholic missions. From Rome, it exercises jurisdiction over the church in Rome's missionary territories. It directs the labors of approximately 25,000

priests, 10,000 lay brothers, and 60,000 nuns. Most of them work in Asia and Africa, and approximately half are nationals.

The Propaganda provides a university in Rome for the training of priests to work in mission areas. It also maintains a press for producing Roman Catholic literature in many languages. Among the agencies of the Christian world mission, and in its size, scope, authority, and ability to deploy resources of men and money throughout the world, the Propaganda stands unique.

#### PROTESTANT OUTREACH

William Carey, the British Baptist cobbler, and a self-taught linguist and botanist, sailed for India in 1793. Although not the first Protestant missionary—Anglicans, Reformed, Lutherans, Moravians, and others had preceded him—Carey marks the beginning of modern Protestant missions.<sup>1</sup> In the nineteenth century these reached out from Western lands to Asia and Africa and then to Latin America. They steadily increased in size, vigor, and accomplishment. This was, in Kenneth Scott Latourette's phrase, "The Great Century." From its outpouring of life in mission, came a world Christian community, diverse in tradition, increasingly drawn together in fellowship.

##### *The Missionary Society*

Something new in the church's life made possible this vigorous missionary expansion—the modern voluntary missionary society. From the fourth century onward, local Ro-

<sup>1</sup> See Hogg, W. R., *Ecumenical Foundations*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952, pp. 1-14.

man Catholic parishes did not participate in missionary outreach. The monks were the missionaries. Monastic orders became the missionary agencies. Usually Roman Catholic rulers supported them. Not until Carey's time did missionary societies begin to emerge in strength.

With but few exceptions, at the dawn of the nineteenth century Protestant churches had no missionary societies. The response to the missionary imperative produced them. These new agencies could not count upon royal subsidies. They could send missionaries only as Christians volunteered to be missionaries. They could support them and their work only as individuals and local congregations voluntarily contributed to their maintenance. In a remarkable, parallel development voluntary missionary societies grew up to support Roman Catholic overseas missions. Thus a new force emerged in Christian history.

In North America as missionary societies developed, they usually became part of their denomination. Through them, and despite an often poor response, Christians saw increasingly that the mission belongs to the church, and that the entire church—every member—is involved in it.

To be sure, only a minority has been committed to the overseas mission of the church. Yet through that minority missionary outreach became a major force in Protestantism. Through it the Holy Spirit has led the church into a new understanding of its life, a new dimension of obedience.

### *Christianity Today*

Today, because of its mission and its missions, Christianity is global. Planted throughout Asia, it has produced there many Christian leaders of first caliber. In Negro

Africa Christianity is growing rapidly. In nominally Catholic Latin America the hierarchy shows new concern to strengthen Roman Catholicism, and at the same time Protestant churches are growing rapidly.

In the United States Christians approximate 57 per cent of the population. In Canada the proportion is larger. Europe, the traditional heart of "Christendom," presents a varied picture. Much of its large, nominally Christian population has fallen away from the church. Yet in European Christianity are appearing strong movements of renewal. In eastern Europe and especially in Russia, the church under communism faces major pressures. Here is the stronghold of the Eastern Orthodox churches.

Thus, in brief, do we see the church as it exists around the world. To gain perspective, we need to see Christianity compared numerically with the world's other religions. Practically speaking, Christians make up approximately one-third of the world's population. Hindus and Muslims together constitute almost another third. Representatives of the other religions and of no religion comprise slightly more than a third. Thus is the picture drawn.

## chapter 5

### THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

The nineteenth century produced a distinctive view of the Christian mission. Foreign missionaries from a Western "home base" crossed the seas to make known the gospel to non-Christians. Not all "at home" were Christians, but they were the object of "evangelism." The mission was different. It took place among a strange and distant people. Many saw on one side the Christian West, and on the other the non-Christian world—the mission field.

#### A NEW VIEW OF MISSION

More recent circumstances have forced a new view of the Christian mission. Two world wars have disclosed an unarrested cancer eating at the vitals of the Western world. Men everywhere have seen this appalling mass of evil. Western man, the man of "Christendom," has shown that he is capable of unimagined savagery. He can incinerate a city of a million people with fire bombs or a single atomic bomb. He has done this. He can, in gas chambers, virtually eliminate one branch of the human race from a continent. He has done this.

*The “Post-Christian Age”*

This revelation of evil has reshaped the thinking of many—and not only in the West. Across Europe indifference toward the church could hardly be greater. Millions there are baptized, but as young people and adults they never enter a church. Many disdain it. It belongs, they say, to another age. It is sick, too, and was powerless to prevent mass evil.

Moreover, the church—Roman, Anglican, Lutheran, or Reformed—no longer dominates European political, intellectual, or cultural life. Its position of favored prominence, held from Constantine's time, no longer exists. Only a minority in Europe can be said to be Christian. Europeans frequently refer to the “post-Christian age,” but more accurate, although unwieldy, is the “post-Christendom age.”

The church and the gospel have shaped European political and cultural life. In a profoundly important sense Europe is undeniably “more Christian” than Asia. Yet today “European Christendom” is a fiction. The idea of a Christian West taking the gospel to a non-Christian, non-Western world is dead.

*New Missionary Understanding*

For the Christian mission this change has been striking. Among Europeans seeking a faith, the gospel now represents only one of several options. Europe's churches increasingly see themselves as minority communities with a vast mission to the millions in whose midst they live. Many realize they now face much the same situation as churches in Asia and Africa.

The perspective has changed—just as the world Christian community has emerged in strength. This makes for a greater sense of equality and a recognition of need for mutual help within that community. It suggests why, among sensitive European Christians, concern for mission, unity, and renewal is so strong. For Europeans, to become active churchmen often means joining a dynamic minority. This is seldom “proper.” The missionary outlook changes.

More than three decades ago, this tidal shift was noted. In 1928, at the Jerusalem World Missionary Conference, Western and non-Western churches came to see that, despite varied outward circumstances, their tasks are essentially the same. In a West that is “far too largely non-Christian,” they declared, the churches face a major non-Christian religion—secularism.

That 1928 conference refused to define the non-Christian world geographically. It pointed out that the non-Christian world exists wherever the Lordship of Christ is not acknowledged. This means that the mission’s home base is neither the West nor a Western church. The base of the mission is nothing less than the living and obedient church *wherever it is in the world*.

The Christian mission reaches to people in specific areas. Its geographical *advance* can be traced, but it never has had a geographic *base*—not in Palestine and not in North America today.

The church exists throughout the world. Wherever it is, there is the mission. Wherever God’s sovereignty is not known or acknowledged, there the church is sent. This New Testament understanding of mission is today being rediscovered. It relates directly to the 1960/61 interdenomini-

national mission study theme in the United States and Canada, "Into All the World Together."

To North Americans, "into all the world together" immediately suggests *doing* something unitedly. A German Lutheran, an Indonesian Presbyterian, and an African Baptist brought into a common mission in Brazil may represent in that situation the highest response of faithful obedience—a united mission. Yet a moment's reflection will show that fulfillment of the total Christian mission in this fashion is impossible. Most of the mission must be carried out locally and nationally by Christian persons and churches already present and working there.

"Into all the world together" does involve common endeavors. And, indeed, too few of these now exist. Yet in its broadest and most profound sense this theme points primarily not to a *doing* but to a basic *understanding*: to knowing that wherever they dwell, God's people are one people to whom has been committed one mission. We may not be direct participants in it, but the mission in France or Korea or anywhere else is also *our* mission. To ignore this or to remain insensitive to it is to deny the unity for which our Lord prayed.

We share, among others, with our German, Mexican, and Bantu brethren, and they with us, in one mission. We and they can go into all the world together when each with concerned interest knows the mission that claims the other and in the unity of prayer upholds the other. Shared faithful concern and prayer are even more important than projects of international co-operation. Thus what is happening in the churches of Great Britain, France, Germany, and Korea is meaningful for Christians in North America.

## THE MISSION IN GREAT BRITAIN

For some years before World War II the tide had been running against the churches in Britain. Between 1936 and 1956 membership in the Congregational Churches declined from 300,000 to 220,000. In the same period in the Church of England communicant members declined from more than 3.6 million to no more than 2.9 million. Yet between 1936 and 1956 Great Britain's population increased from 45 to 49 million.

Although surrounded by a sea of indifference, the church in Britain confronts little antagonism. Most of the British regard themselves as Christians, and yet for millions the church is peripheral and has little relevance to life.

*A Call to Mission*

During World War II the Church of England launched a thoroughgoing study. The 1945 findings pointed to the "drift from religion" and the "collapse of Christian moral standards." They showed that only 10 per cent of the people had any real touch with the church. Thus pulpit preaching could hardly be an effective means of evangelizing. "You can not convert people who are not there." The study also disclosed that factory workers and tradesmen are almost completely alienated from the church.

The report bears a striking title: *Towards the Conversion of England*. In it are judgment, repentance, and call to mission. It is blunt. It declares that England, long regarded as a Christian land, stands in need of conversion. Conversion is the goal of evangelism. Evangelism, properly understood, is the mission (or apostolate) of the whole church.

As part of that apostolate, each Christian is in mission and must work for the conversion of England.

In North America this report is scarcely known. Yet it is fresh and relevant—a sound handbook for any congregation wanting to know how to fulfill its God-given mission. For those who assume that people already in churches do not need converting and for those who assume that conversion means one particular kind of experience, this Anglican study could prove salutary.

### *House churches*

House churches are providing new missionary outreach in Britain. During World War II's bombings, churches often convened neighborhood house meetings. Fifteen years after the war, house churches continue to serve a need. They are spreading also in Scandinavia, France, and Germany. Each one becomes a Bible study group with members taking turns in leading.

Most house churches become evangelizing mission centers. Why? Next door neighbors who would not step inside a church will join this kind of informal but close fellowship. Moreover, intensely personal Bible study and prayer kindle inner devotion. As a center of renewal, and as a way of touching people who need conversion, the house church serves the mission.

### THE MISSION IN FRANCE

Of France's 44 million people, probably 35 million are baptized Catholics. Yet only four million French Catholics (10 per cent of the population) attend church with any degree of regularity. Roman Catholic scholars today agree

that large segments of the French population are "de-Christianized."

The "de-Christianization" of masses of French people came into sharp focus in 1943. In France that year a remarkable book appeared. Written by a Roman Catholic priest, it asked in its French title, *Is France a Mission Land?*<sup>21</sup> Answering his own question, Father Henri Godin affirmed that the big cities of France with their large population of industrial workers are basically pagan.

Godin's importance is twofold. First, he demonstrated that a traditionally Roman Catholic European nation can be a mission land, with its traditional church a church of the minority. Second, despite his early death in 1944, he helped give rise to the worker-priest movement with its mission to the "pagan masses."

### *Worker-priests*

To win these people to the gospel required a new mission—French workers and priests who would, *as missionaries*, live among the workers and establish *new patterns* of Roman Catholic church life in their midst. The mission of the worker-priests resulted.

The worker-priests—industrial workers by day, missionary priests at night—were dedicated to a special form of mission. At their height they numbered only about one hundred men. Yet they sparked the French imagination. In 1954, and for reasons too complex to be put briefly, the hierarchy ended the eleven-year experiment. Several

<sup>21</sup> Godin, Henri and Daniel, Yvan, "France a Missionary Land?" (tr. and ed. by Maisie Ward) in *France Pagan? The Mission of Abbé Godin* by Maisie Ward. New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1949.

years later more than half the worker-priests were still at their posts. The apostolic zeal from which that experiment sprang continues to produce in the Roman Catholic Church in France exciting bursts of new life.

### *Renewal of Parish Life*

The life and work of Abbé George Michonneau demonstrates this renewal. A parish priest, Michonneau serves where factory workers live. His ministry has one dominant theme—the church lives in mission. To achieve its true life each congregation must become in the fullest sense a missionary community.

Michonneau does not wish a new pattern or separated kind of church life for workingmen. He wants to transform existing parish churches into communities in which people of socially different backgrounds can be won, and made one in Christ. The fruit of his efforts to change a lethargic, self-satisfied church into a people in mission appeared in a little book, *The Parish, a Missionary Community*.<sup>1</sup> It attempts an answer to the question—"How does a local congregation become a missionary community?"

Vigorous and dedicated, Abbé Michonneau is a man of action. Fearful that his first book had over-stressed methods, he produced another, *Missionary Spirit in Parish Life*. It centers on what missionary spirit means. For Michonneau, the congregation of "faithful parishioners" is not enough, for it can be stagnant and deny the real nature of the church. Only apostolic Christians, laymen and clergy-

<sup>1</sup> Translated and published (1949) as *Revolution in a City Parish*. This and Michonneau's more recent books have been published by the Newman Press, Westminster, Md.

men together, in community and in mission can live the real life of the church.

From within French Roman Catholicism has emerged a concern to make the church missionary. This, one believes, is an evidence of the Holy Spirit's working. If so, it ill-behooves non-Roman Christians to disregard what is happening. What better mission study course for many North American congregations than one based on Michonneau's two books? Shared Christian experiences between Protestants and Roman Catholics in the United States and Canada are few. Here is one possibility.

Such study could provide useful self-examination in a mirror Protestants almost never use. One who reads these books may find himself under evangelical conviction. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

#### THE MISSION IN GERMANY

The situation in German church life is equally illuminating. At least 95 per cent of the Germans are nominally Christian. In the East Zone 83 per cent and in West Germany more than 50 per cent are Protestant. As in so many European countries, the majority of those confirmed in the church rarely attend. No more than 5 to 10 per cent of Germany's people could be classified as participating church members.

Two background facts need to be kept in mind. First, in Germany, as in France, industrial workers remain almost entirely outside the church. Second, voluntary lay participation in the church has not been extensive, although the church has its deaconesses, parish workers, and teachers.

### *The Kirchentag*

Since World War II some heartening developments have emerged in German Protestantism. One of these is the *Kirchentag*, the Evangelical Church Congress. Behind it stands a remarkable layman with a doctorate in international law, Reinhold von Thadden.

As president of the Pomeranian Synod of the Confessing Church, von Thadden was arrested by the Nazis in 1937. Eventually released, he was called into army service and, following Germany's occupation of Belgium, was made commandant of occupied Louvain. As commandant, von Thadden defied an SS order to kill Belgian hostages. For this and other acts, a grateful Louvain in 1947 invited back its wartime enemy commander for a testimonial dinner and an award. A unique event—an unusual man!

Captured by the Russians before the war ended, von Thadden was sent to a prison camp north of the Arctic Circle. There, in Bible study and conversation with men of all backgrounds, he discovered that God had enabled him to make plain the gospel.

On returning to Germany, von Thadden devoted himself to developing a strong Christian lay movement. The result was the *Kirchentag*. Motivating it is von Thadden's missionary purpose. The church, he holds, engages in mission only where it meets the world. The church on that frontier is the layman in his everyday pursuits as workman, farmer, or lawyer witnessing to the gospel. The church's mission means the mission of the laity in and to the world.

Local congresses are held throughout Germany, but the real *Kirchentag* landmarks have been the national mass

meetings. To these great Christian assemblies have come hundreds of thousands of people from East and West Germany—as many as six hundred thousand on one occasion. What a witness to the Christian faith!

*Kirchentag* sessions include addresses by church leaders, discussions on pertinent Christian themes (e.g., “Christ the Lord of All Life,” and “The Christian in the Factory”), parades, choral singing, prayer meetings, and communion. At the heart of the whole movement is Bible study.

### *The Evangelical Academies*

Different from the *Kirchentag*, yet springing from the same missionary concern, are the Evangelical Academies. They help the church to hear the world's questions. They enable factory owners, mill workers, farmers, doctors—Christian and non-Christian alike—meeting in an attractive retreat setting, to discuss freely the problems of work, politics, and morals.

At the Academies' insistence, invitations for the week end or week-long sessions go out not from churches but from professional associations, factories, and trade groups. The nearly twenty Academies yearly serve fifty thousand people. Many of these would never enter a church. Yet in Academy sessions—in earnest conversation quite different from formal church worship—they have a chance to see the Christian gospel related to all life.

### THE MISSION IN KOREA

Closely related by culture to China, Korea, from 1905 until the end of World War II, was under Japan's control. Divided since 1950 into the Communist North and the non-

Communist South, the little country has never had a happy history.

Christianity was late in entering Korea. When in the 1880's Korea granted commercial treaties to the Western powers, a small community of Roman Catholics, originating from China, already had been in Korea for a century. Protestant missionaries first arrived in 1884-85.

### *Class Groups*

Korean Protestantism is vigorous. Much of its internal missionary thrust has come from class groups with their systematic Bible study. In many classes one question has been put regularly, "Have you led anyone to Christ?" Repeatedly asked in faithful expectation, that question instills a conviction—each Christian shares directly and responsibly in the church's mission. These groups provide close, sustaining fellowship, and they train leaders. Moreover, they attract non-Christians. They are part of the mission.

### *Church Growth Amidst Tragedy*

Through World War II, the dislocations of the postwar period, and the completely disruptive warfare of 1950-51, the church has continued to grow. Korea has been crossed and recrossed by fighting armies. Its land has been burned and laid waste. Inflation has mounted. Since 1950 millions have been made homeless. Even in 1959, one person in every seven in Korea was a refugee.

The young Korean church has not looked back in despair. It has pressed forward vigorously. Through an ever-enlarging ministry of service it has re-established families,

healed broken lives, and brought new hope amidst tragedy.

Of Korea's 30 million people, approximately two-thirds now live in the South, in the Republic of Korea. Before 1950 Christians were more heavily concentrated in the North. Many Christians remain in Communist North Korea, but in the past decade scores of thousands have fled southward.

Despite this national upheaval, the church continues to spread. Presbyterians predominate, and each presbytery has a missionary society for evangelizing its area. The great majority of new Christians have been won by the daily witness of individual church members. Yet with heavy heart one must recognize the sorry divisions and doctrinal controversies that often plague Korea's churches and keep them from an even more effective outreach.

Significantly, the Korean churches have supplied some four hundred military chaplains—all but a half-dozen or so are Protestant—to the armed forces of the Republic of Korea. It is hardly coincidence that probably more than 15 per cent of the men in South Korea's forces have declared themselves to be Christian.

#### *Korean and Other Asian Churches*

As recently as 1930, there were only 380,000 Christians in Korea—110,000 of them Roman Catholic. Now for the country at large, the latest statistics show a Roman Catholic community of nearly 200,000 and a Protestant community of more than 1,300,000.

The meaning of this growth is profoundly significant. In only seventy-five years, between 1885 and 1960, 5 per cent of Korea's people have become Christians. In pro-

portion to its surrounding population, Korea's Christian community virtually matches that of Indonesia, which has six million Christians—five million of whom are Protestant—in a population of 86 million. Yet Christianity there and in the Philippines goes back to the sixteenth century. Except for these two countries, no other Asian nation has so high a proportion of Christians. Even more important, no other Asian Christian community can match the Korean Christians' remarkable rate of growth.

Contrast the situation elsewhere in Asia. As long ago as 1700, there may have been two million Christians in India. Yet today Christians represent only about 2.5 per cent of India's population. Christians in China a decade ago numbered about 1 per cent of the population and in 1960, we may assume from the reports that have reached beyond the bamboo curtain, the number is probably proportionately less. Japan's Christians today include only .5 per cent of the Japanese people, despite the fact that significant opportunities for evangelization were opened in that country after the war.

Seen against this background, Christianity's rapid rise in seventy-five years in Korea is outstanding. Moreover, Christian leaders there have a great vision. They speak of mission on such a scale that they hope within two decades to see a *majority* of their fellow countrymen Christian! The timetable may or may not be accurate, but the zeal is unmistakable. It is also humbling.

The Korean church has not limited itself in mission to its homeland. It has maintained missionaries in China and Japan, and today has missionaries in Thailand and Taiwan. Thrilling potential resides in the Korean church. It

understands that life in Christ means life in mission. In the providence of God, what may be its role in the future?

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The church dwells in the midst of a mission field. The obedience in mission required of it in one century or in one country may differ from that required in another, but one essential fact remains—the church lives in mission or it dies.

## chapter 6

### COMMUNITY AND DISUNITY

Thirty-four in every one hundred of the earth's people claim the Christian faith. Of these, one-half (seventeen) are Roman Catholic. Approximately one-third (eleven) are Protestant, and one-sixth (six) are Orthodox and others.

Of the eleven Protestants, three are Lutherans. Strongly represented in Germany and Scandinavia, they compose the largest Protestant family. Now follows a feat that can be performed only statistically. One and one-half persons each represent the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches, the Anglicans (Episcopalians in the U.S.A.), the Baptists, and the Methodists. Finally, two persons stand for all other Protestants together. This last group includes, among many others, Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ, Brethren, Quakers, the Salvation Army, Assemblies of God, and Pentecostals.

Throughout the world the church does not appear outwardly to be one body. It seems rather to be split into larger or smaller groups. Yet precisely where Christianity seems most divided—in Protestantism—there has been

growing a striking new kind of unity. Moreover, this unity extends beyond Protestantism and embraces other Christians as well.

Among the majority of non-Roman Christian churches there has emerged a richly diverse world Christian community. A world-wide fellowship of prayer, love, mutual service, and unity, it transcends denominational, national, and racial lines. Often designated "the Ecumenical Movement," this global fellowship is new in Christian history. It is an outgrowth of missionary obedience.

The non-Roman world Christian community, many Christians believe, stands as one of the mighty works of God in history. Yet uninformed enthusiasm sometimes distorts its nature and size. What does it represent?

#### FOUR CATEGORIES OF CHRISTIANS

When we look at the world's Christians, we see that they comprise four major groups.

##### *Roman Catholics*

The Roman Catholic Church forms the largest Christian body. Within it exist diversity and also sharp divisions. In organizational control and effectiveness the Roman Church is unparalleled.

Yet it is doubtful whether within Roman Catholicism there is anything comparable to the diverse, spontaneous, and free but closely-knit Christian community of the Ecumenical Movement. Rome's nearest equivalents to some non-Roman ecumenical emergents perhaps appear in its world Eucharistic Congresses and its international lay organization, Catholic Action.

There is a difference between a single world-wide church under papal authority, with uniform structure and worship, and a world-wide *community* of churches. In the latter, churches with richly different outlook, tradition, and structure contribute to and uphold one another in a fellowship whose only acknowledged authority is the Spirit of God.

### *Eastern Orthodox*

The Eastern Orthodox Churches center in eastern Europe and the Near East. With certain notable exceptions, these autonomous, national churches have not been actively missionary, but they have maintained a close sense of community. With the major exception of the Russian Orthodox Church, which is the largest, most of them have co-operated in the Ecumenical Movement.

### *Protestants Within the Ecumenical Movement*

A third group consists of the great majority of Protestant churches. In the Ecumenical Movement they have found growing co-operation. Their number includes Lutherans, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Reformed, Baptists, Methodists, Disciples, Congregationalists, Brethren, Moravians, the Salvation Army, Quakers, and others. Actively missionary, most of these denominations are found throughout the world.

These churches have been reaching out toward one another in conversation, work, and worship. With the Orthodox Churches, they find the *symbol* of their unity in the World Council of Churches. Although differing on many points of theology, they share a spiritual kinship. Free of

external authority and tempered by two world wars, the world Christian community of which they are a part displays a remarkably cohesive strength.

### *Protestants Not in the Ecumenical Movement<sup>1</sup>*

Those Protestant bodies that cannot in good conscience co-operate within the World Council of Churches—or, in the United States within the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.—comprise a fourth group. These include churches that refer to themselves as “Evangelical,” “Fundamentalist,” and “Pentecostal.” Although some of these bodies are joined together in the World Evangelical Fellowship, significant differences and divisions exist among them.

In many of the World Council of Churches’ member bodies there are probably individuals and congregations that find within this fourth group a more congenial spirit and a more authentic voice. Yet among this fourth group’s constituency some individual members and congregations probably would like to be associated with the World Council of Churches.

Here is a dynamic minority within Protestantism. More vigorously missionary than the majority, it is proportionately the more rapidly growing segment of Protestantism in many parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Although smallest in the world scene, it finds its largest expression in North America. In overseas outreach its influence is growing.

<sup>1</sup> No attempt is made here to categorize and deal with Unitarians, Christian Scientists, Mormons, and non-Western bodies such as certain Bantu sects, The True Jesus Church in China, etc.

**NORTH AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM AND  
THE OVERSEAS MISSION**

Today there exists a world Christian community. Within it, overseas missions from the West continue, and face ever-larger tasks. Yet external and internal forces have led them into a period of major and difficult transition. This new situation poses searching questions and requires a reshaping of many traditional patterns of missionary endeavor.

*North Americans and Europeans*

Part of the transition involves the nationality of overseas missionaries. In 1911 the mission societies of Europe and Britain supplied two-thirds of the Protestant missionaries. One-third came from North America. In less than fifty years the proportion was reversed. Today North American churches supply two-thirds of the world's Protestant missionaries. The current situation can best be seen in Table I.

TABLE I  
PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES <sup>1</sup>

<i>Sending Area</i>	<i>Missionaries</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
North America (Includes 774 from Canada)	25,058	64.9
Great Britain	7,000	18.1
Europe	5,597	14.5
Australia, New Zealand	847	2.2
Asia, Africa, Latin America	104	.3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>38,608</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>1</sup> Reconstructed from figures cited in: *Missionary Research Library, Occasional Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No. 10, December 8, 1958.

Churches in the United States occupy a dominant position in the Protestant world mission. With more Protestants than any other country, the United States should be expected to and does supply the largest contingent of overseas workers, but proportionately, Great Britain provides just as many missionaries.<sup>1</sup> What is more, North American churches command a material wealth unprecedented in the history of Christianity. These two facts point not only to weighty responsibilities, but also to certain dangers and difficulties. Not least of the latter is the non-Western world's frequent association of Protestant Christianity specifically—and sometimes painfully—with American life and American wealth.

### *The Division of Foreign Missions*

At this juncture a brief historical glance will help fill in the background of our story. Bringing together missionary agencies in the United States and Canada, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (FMC) was begun in 1893. Its early membership comprised almost all the Protestant bodies active in missions, including the Episcopal Church and the Southern Baptist Convention. Non-denominational agencies such as the China Inland Mission and the American Bible Society also co-operated.

The FMC grew rapidly. It became the interdenominational agency for missionary co-operation in North America.

<sup>1</sup> Eighty-five per cent of the Protestant missionaries come from Anglo-Saxon lands. The majority represent what in Europe and Great Britain are called the "Free Churches"—Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, etc. Some of the very important implications of this are dealt with in H. P. Van Dusen's *World Christianity*. New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press, 1947, pp. 127-129.

Through its missionary boards planned their efforts in accord with overall policy arrived at together. Through the FMC its member societies did much together they could not have done separately. The FMC spoke for them before the government, a large and frequent responsibility. It helped to support German and other continental missions in both world wars. In 1921 the FMC became a member of the newly founded International Missionary Council.

For several decades the FMC was the most inclusive agency of Christian co-operation anywhere. In 1950, when the National Council of the Churches of Christ came into being, the FMC voted to become that body's Division of Foreign Missions (DFM). At this time, the Canadian boards withdrew to form the Department of Overseas Missions of the Canadian Council of Churches. Through a special arrangement, the DFM remains more inclusive denominationally than the National Council of Churches. Nevertheless in 1950 several bodies withdrew, the largest of which was from the Southern Baptist Convention.

Today the DFM is the world's largest national agency of missionary co-operation. Through it the central bodies of American Protestantism work together. Its associate members include among others the missionary boards of the Seventh Day Adventists, the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod.

### *Some Comparisons*

In the 1950's for the first time societies not associated with the DFM were sending out more missionaries than DFM boards. Here is a new factor of major significance.

In what follows missionary agencies not co-operating with the DFM are designated collectively as "non-DFM" boards.

Only thirty-five years ago, in 1925, missionaries of the non-DFM boards represented about 19 per cent of the total missionaries sent overseas. By 1958 they comprised 58 per cent of American Protestant missionaries overseas. Their relative size can be seen in Table II.

TABLE II  
NORTH AMERICAN PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES, 1958<sup>1</sup>

Category	Number of Overseas Missionaries	Percentage of World Total
Non-DFM <sup>2</sup>	14,131	36.6
DFM Associated Boards <sup>3</sup>	2,595	6.7
DFM Member Boards	7,558	19.6
Canadian Boards <sup>4</sup>	774	2.0
	<hr/> 25,058	<hr/> 64.0

<sup>1</sup> Reconstructed from figures in: *Missionary Research Library, Occasional Bulletin, op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Includes Foreign Missions Department of the General Council of the Assemblies of God (676 missionaries) and General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America (148 missionaries). Because both hold full, voting membership in the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association but an associate and non-voting membership in the DFM, they are counted here.

<sup>3</sup> DFM Associated Boards maintain fellowship with the DFM and participate without vote in its meetings. The five largest, including the two mentioned above, are Seventh Day Adventists (2000 missionaries, including some non-North Americans), The Board of Missions in Foreign Countries of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod (241 missionaries), and The Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (170 missionaries).

<sup>4</sup> Of these, 581 missionaries come from member churches of the Department of Overseas Missions of the Canadian Council of Churches.

### *"Evangelical" Missions*

The segment of American Protestantism that most frequently calls itself "Evangelical" has a sizeable missionary outreach, providing nearly 37 per cent of the total Protes-

tant missionary force. Indeed, it supplies nearly twice as many missionaries as the larger co-operating American Protestant bodies combined. Its missionary income has reached large proportions also as Table III shows.

TABLE III  
NORTH AMERICAN PROTESTANT MISSIONARY  
INCOME, 1957<sup>1</sup>

Category	Income for Overseas Missions (in millions)	Percentage of North American Total
Non-DFM <sup>2</sup>	\$ 59.7	40.56
DFM Associated Boards <sup>3</sup>	16.9	11.48
DFM Member Boards	64.7	43.95
Canadian Boards	5.9	4.01
	<u>\$147.2</u>	<u>100.00</u>

<sup>1</sup> See Table II, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> See Table II, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> See Table II, p. 75.

Behind these figures is to be seen a striking expansion of "Evangelical" missionary agencies in the past two decades. Their growth springs from tremendous missionary zeal. Implicit in it is at least one largely unquestioned assumption, namely, that the Christian world mission in our time requires more and more *American* missionaries overseas. But does it? No simple "yes" or "no" answer suffices. Adequate response requires searching and prayerful examination of many factors, some of which are related elsewhere in this book.<sup>1</sup>

These statistics underscore a compelling new fact in the Christian mission. They need to be known and appraised.

<sup>1</sup> See chapters 1, pp. 10-11; pp. 21-23; and 9, pp. 108-109.

To elaborate on what they may signify and why goes beyond the scope of these pages. Yet one must emphasize that the figures in Tables II and III do not tell the whole story.

For years, and as considered policy, many DFM boards have been shifting more of their financial resources from the support of individual missionaries into channels designed to strengthen non-Western churches and to enable them more readily to fulfill their mission. Projects include national and international institutes, centers for studying non-Christian religions, provision for church leaders to examine and consider the role of the Christian faith in their rapidly changing societies, the publication of significant books by Christian nationals, and the upbuilding of theological education. In short, resources have gone increasingly into strengthening the national church and its leadership.

Many other factors need investigation. One is the number of national workers and church members in relation to each missionary at work in a particular area. Here the record of DFM boards is unusually good. It shows a high ratio of national pastors, workers, and church members to each North American missionary. This points to the development of strong non-Western churches. The whole thrust has been away from the old pattern of missionary domination. Again, DFM boards maintain a much larger institutional work such as schools and hospitals.

#### AGENCIES OF "EVANGELICAL" CO-OPERATION

In personnel non-DFM missionary societies now represent the dominant factor in North American Protestantism's missionary outreach. Their size and financial strength re-

quire that one should know something about the three organizations through which they co-operate.

#### *The Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association*

The Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (IFMA), founded in 1917, is the oldest and largest. It serves forty-two faith missions with a total of 5,900 missionaries.<sup>1</sup> These are non-denominational missionary societies that in prayerful faith believe that their needs for personnel and finance will be met through the working of the Holy Spirit. The faith mission movement gained its major impetus when J. Hudson Taylor, a great English missionary of deep faith and winsome spirit, founded the China Inland Mission in 1865.

Today IFMA member societies include The Sudan Interior Mission, The Evangelical Alliance Mission, The Africa Inland Mission, The China Inland Mission, and smaller groups such as the Regions Beyond Missionary Union, and The Missionary Aviation Fellowship.

#### *The Evangelical Foreign Missions Association*

The Evangelical Foreign Missions Association (EFMA) emerged in 1945 as a co-operative agency for those who felt the conservative "Evangelical" position was not or could not be adequately represented in any already established organization. It operates within the structure of the National Association of Evangelicals. The EFMA does not look with favor upon "ecumenical agencies," but several of its mem-

<sup>1</sup> All figures cited in the following paragraphs are from the Missionary Research Library, *Occasional Bulletin, op. cit.* The IFMA *Missions Annual*, 1959, lists (p. 55) more than 7000 IFMA missionaries, some of them non-North Americans.

bers share concerns with others as DFM Associated Boards.

The EFMA includes both denominational and non-denominational boards, representing a total of 4,700 missionaries. Its larger denominational societies include the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, the Conservative Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, and the General Board of the Church of the Nazarene. The largest of its non-denominational societies is the Oriental Missionary Society.

#### *The Associated Mission Agencies of the International Council of Christian Churches*

The Associated Mission Agencies of the International Council of Christian Churches (AMICC) is the smallest non-DFM agency of co-operation. Its largest component is the American Council of Churches. The latter, since its founding in 1941, has been associated with the name of Carl McIntire of Collingswood, New Jersey. The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism and Baptist Mid-Missions provide 691 of the AMICC's 851 missionaries and account for more than 85 per cent of the overseas expenditures of all its member boards.

While closely related theologically to the EFMA, the AMICC stands apart from and vigorously censures it for refusing to denounce the "apostasy" of the DFM. The AMICC aggressively opposes all "ecumenical" agencies.

#### *Non-Associated Societies*

Some denominational and non-denominational missionary societies remain wholly independent. Among the former, the Foreign Missionary Board of the Southern Baptist

Convention is unique. In 1958 it had nearly 1,200 overseas missionaries and a budget of \$14.2 million. None of the other independent denominational societies has more than 110 missionaries. Among the independent nondenominational societies, the New Tribes Mission ranks largest with nearly 390 missionaries. None of the others has as many as fifty missionaries.

### *Relationships*

These then are the co-operative missionary agencies and some of the independent societies in the United States of America that operate apart from the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches.<sup>1</sup> In the main, they are fundamentalist in theology,<sup>2</sup> but they exhibit very different attitudes. The AMICC is militant and separates itself decisively from those who differ with it. In contrast, the EFMA is much more conciliatory and inclusive.

The non-DFM societies are sending out a steadily growing number of missionaries. This contrasts with the long term trend in DFM boards. In Africa and Latin America, where Protestantism is growing most rapidly, non-DFM missionaries outnumber DFM workers two to one. In the more difficult fields of North Africa and Asia, DFM missionaries represent a proportionately much stronger force.

Friction and difficulties overseas are not unknown. Some non-DFM societies locate only where other missions are at

<sup>1</sup> For a comparative listing of the largest DFM and non-DFM societies, see Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> The theological "fundamentals" usually cited are (1) the literal inerrancy of Scripture, (2) the Virgin Birth, (3) the deity of Jesus Christ, (4) the physical resurrection, (5) substitutionary atonement, (6) the physical second coming of Jesus Christ.

work and seek to win those already Christian to their own particular interpretation of the faith. This can and usually does produce untold damage among new Christians and to the total Christian witness among non-Christians. Yet some non-DFM societies carefully seek out areas where no other Christian work exists. They are doing much of today's most effective pioneering in unreached areas. Several non-DFM bodies co-operate overseas with DFM agencies in organizations such as the Congo Protestant Council. Generalizations are difficult.

#### TOWARD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Within the world Christian community the conviction is widely and deeply held that in our time the Spirit of God is moving among the churches to bring them into a new experience of unity in Christ. The ecumenical agencies reflect this. The one theological statement required of any church seeking membership in the National Council of Churches of Christ is that it accepts "Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior." Similarly, the World Council of Churches requires of its members only that they confess "Jesus Christ as God and Savior."

Behind these affirmations and underlying all ecumenical conversation is the conviction that those churches that confess "Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior" already have a given unity in Christ. They not only can, but also *should* come together in frank discussion and shared endeavor without the prior requirement of any other creedal statement or theological consensus.

This is not what is sometimes scornfully tabbed "lowest common denominator theology." It is acknowledgment that

the household of faith exists in Jesus Christ the Risen and Living Lord. It affirms that, within the diversity of that household of faith, men can and must speak in the spirit of truth with one another. All the while they must be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. The result of this has not been theological dilution but spiritual renewal.

Those Anglo-Saxon Christians who claim exclusively for themselves the great word "Evangelical"<sup>1</sup> hold that within the ecumenical fellowship, and specifically in the National Council of the Churches of Christ or in the World Council of Churches, some or all of their theological fundamentals are either denied or compromised. They believe themselves thus bound in sincere Christian conscience not to participate in that fellowship that seems to them to destroy or compromise the gospel.

Such division between those who are inheritors of a common evangelical tradition and who confess a common redemption in Jesus Christ is tragic. It is the more pitiable because there seems so little chance for understanding conversation. All who are concerned must pray fervently and act responsibly to the end that this division may be healed.

<sup>1</sup> German, Latin, and some other Protestant Christians use "Evangelical" instead of "Protestant." That usage is in no way involved in the above distinction.

## chapter 7

### ECUMENICAL MEANINGS

**A**round the globe World War II was raging. In Britain great cities had been bombed into a shambles. Yet one man there saw a much greater reality in the world than the war. This was William Temple.

Temple became Archbishop of Canterbury in April, 1942. On the day of his consecration he preached about God's work in building up the world Christian community. This fellowship that crosses national lines and brings unity out of differences came about, he said, "almost incidentally" from the previous 150 years of missionary enterprise. This community, this closely knit fellowship, this Ecumenical Movement, Temple declared, "is the great new fact of our era."

Obedience to God in mission has brought forth an unexpected fruit. For the first time on a world scale in the church, people of every color, nation, tongue, and heritage are coming into a new experience. They are discovering their unity in Christ and their mission as God's people. In a physically one but spiritually shattered world, they are recognizing the only sure source of authentic community.

This reality may yet be "for the healing of the nations."

In the church human frailties and divisions abound. In many American congregations, for example, Negro and white Christians cannot kneel at the altar together to share in the Lord's Supper. For such repudiation of unity in the Spirit the church stands under judgment. In such acts it denies its mission and flaunts a disobedience like that of ancient Israel.

William Temple, when he preached on the world Christian community, was not blind to all this, anymore than he was insensitive to the devastation that was raining down on England. Yet as a parent sees the wonder and beauty in his child's imperfectly expressed but newly flowering talent, Temple could see the glory in this newly emerged world Christian community. Its very existence underscores those situations that deny the unity within it.

One who is sensitive to what has been happening in the church—to which we give the name the Ecumenical Movement—cannot but confess in faith and prayerful hope that the Spirit of God is once again leading his people into a new land.

#### THE WORD "ECUMENICAL"

When something new appears, we find a name for it. For most people in 1940, reference to "the sound barrier," "antibiotics," and "atomic power" would have produced a blank stare. Today we all know what these terms mean.

In recent years in the churches the phrase "Ecumenical Movement" has become current. Like atomic energy, it is new. It carries tremendous power. Christians should know what "ecumenical" means.

*Biblical and Early Use*

“Ecumenical” has a venerable ancestry and comes from the Greek word, *oikoumene*, meaning “the inhabited earth.” At the dawn of the Christian era, the word appeared in an early Greek translation of the Old Testament. In it one read, for example, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world (*oikoumene*) and those who dwell therein.” (Psalm 24.)

In the Greek New Testament *oikoumene* appears fifteen times. It is used, for example, in the nativity story: “. . . a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world (*oikoumene*) should be enrolled.” (Luke 2:1.) Indeed, the great Roman emperors often claimed the title “Lord of the Earth (*oikoumene*).” The word was widely familiar.

In time, the designation “ecumenical” was applied to the church’s great doctrinal councils that began in the fourth century. Because they were thought to represent the whole church in all the world, and because their decisions were intended for the entire church, they were called ecumenical.<sup>1</sup>

*Recent Use*

After the 1850’s the word “ecumenical” took on new overtones. YMCA and missionary leaders used it to refer to a world-wide Christian fellowship—usually limited to Protestants—that rose above the divisions of nation, race, and denomination. In New York, in 1900, the huge “Ecumeni-

<sup>1</sup> Thus in our day Pope John XXIII calls an “ecumenical council.” In Roman eyes it will represent *the whole church* in all the world, but not all “separated” Christians.

cal Missionary Conference" chose its designation because, gathering together Christians of many churches and races, its concern and strategy included the whole world.

After World War I the word "ecumenical" took on fuller meaning. Many churchmen began to use it to mean co-operation among different churches looking toward a larger unity. When Protestants and Orthodox met in the 1937 Oxford Conference, they distinguished between two related words. "International," they suggested, assumes and starts from mankind's *national* divisions. "Ecumenical" begins with the churches' *oneness* in Christ.

### *Meaning Today*

After the World Council of Churches was founded at Amsterdam in 1948, the word "ecumenical" gained new prominence—and frequent misuse. In attempting to clarify the word's meaning, the new organization came very close to defining it.

The word "ecumenical" is properly used to describe everything that relates to the whole task of the whole Church to bring the Gospel to the whole world. It therefore covers equally the missionary movement and the movement towards unity, and must not be used to describe the latter in contradistinction to the former. We believe that a real service will be rendered to true thinking on these subjects in the Churches if we so use this word that it covers both Unity and Mission in the context of the whole world.<sup>1</sup>

The word "ecumenical" involves two inseparable elements—mission and unity. Both are of the essence of the

<sup>1</sup> World Council of Churches: *Minutes and Reports of the Fourth Meeting of the Central Committee*. Rolle, Switzerland: August 4-11, 1951, p. 65.

church.<sup>1</sup> If one is in the church, he must take seriously its mission and unity—its ecumenical dimension.

### ECUMENICITY'S MISSIONARY ROOTS

The Ecumenical Movement has deep roots in the Christian mission. For one thing, as the church spread overseas in the nineteenth century, missionaries found need to counsel and plan together. In the twentieth century the tempo of co-operation quickened. The results were far reaching.

Where Christians were few, several denominations often had to undertake great projects in education and medicine together. Where non-Christians comprised 99 per cent of the population, division, separation, or competition among Christians proved defeating. In such a setting many saw clearly that these are contrary to God's will. In China, for example, concerns that earlier in Europe and Britain had led to founding the Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Congregational Churches seemed remote and meaningless. Bishop V. S. Azariah of India put it neatly. He said that in the West denominationalism is a weakness; in the East it is a sin.

Among non-Christians the gospel's presentation requires compelling witness. Missionaries declared the gospel to be a reconciling power. Yet in non-Christian eyes, the missionaries' denominational separation denied this. Amid non-Christians, missionaries and Christian nationals alike saw the need for unity. Increasingly, they achieved it.

It is no accident that the way for the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference was largely prepared by in-

<sup>1</sup> Compare the four traditional, essential marks of the church: "The church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic."

terdenominational co-operative missionary conferences in Asia. In the life of the church, Edinburgh, 1910, stands as a landmark. From that decisive gathering came many of the outward and tangible evidences of the Ecumenical Movement. Among the fruits of the Edinburgh Conference are the International Missionary Council, the world-wide network of national Christian councils, co-operative endeavors on every continent, church unions, the Faith and Order Movement, and, nearly four decades later, the World Council of Churches.

Obedience in mission has disclosed disobedience in disunity. In their one Lord and in their common redemption, the people of God have been given their unity. The churches need not create or build this unity. It already exists. God has given it. The great problem lies in acknowledging and displaying it. The separation of white and Negro Christians constitutes a prime mark of disunity. Within a faith that proclaims reconciling power and unity, the separation of human beings appears to many as a blasphemous mockery. The church's unity involves far more than denominational structures.

Christians agree that the church is one. They do not agree on how to make this oneness evident and visible to the world. Thus, increasingly within the Ecumenical Movement men are asking, "What is the nature of the unity we seek?" At the moment, no conclusive answer exists.

The Holy Spirit has led the church out into a new dimension of its life. From time to time in great ecumenical moments men have experienced with joy what the unity of God's people means. Yet everywhere one sees denials of that unity. How are men to respond to, and embody in a

common life, the unity in mission that God commits to his church?

When the answer to that question becomes clear, it will be fuller, richer, more comprehensive, more diverse, and more flexible than any now foreseen. This is one mark of the glory of the Ecumenical Movement. In it, in accord with the measure of our faith and of our obedience to the Holy Spirit, we are being led by God into that kind of life that he wills for his church.

#### THE ECUMENICAL STRUCTURE

Thus far we have considered the Ecumenical Movement in broad general terms. What are some of its concrete expressions?

Examples of organized ecumenicity divide readily into two classes. Unifying co-operation includes the agencies of common endeavor. Uniting action relates to the uniting of churches. We shall examine each in more detail.

##### *Unifying Co-operation*

Under the heading of unifying co-operation, the first subdivision comprises the non-church agencies of Christian co-operation. These nondenominational organizations exist outside the churches and bring together Christians from many denominations. Among many possible examples are the World's Alliance of YMCA's, the World's Student Christian Federation, and the United Bible Societies.

The second group under this heading includes church or church agency federations, such as city, state, and national councils of churches. Most familiar to North Americans are the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

and the Canadian Council of Churches. The National Christian Council of Thailand, the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil, and other similar bodies exist around the world. At the international level are such agencies as the World Council of Christian Education, the International Missionary Council, and the World Council of Churches. The East Asia Christian Conference is a regional grouping.

### *Uniting Action*

Uniting action also includes two parts. The first is mutual recognition. This involves one church officially recognizing the ministry of another. As a result, intercommunion becomes possible for the members of each church. In the United States mutual recognition exists, without formal declaration, among some Protestant churches. Presbyterians, Methodists, members of the United Church of Christ, and others practice mutual open communion. For others, among them most Lutherans and Episcopalians, and many Baptists, this is impossible. North American examples of official mutual recognition are few.

The second kind of uniting action is corporate union. Many church unions repair earlier separations within a denominational family. The United Lutheran Church in America, The Methodist Church, and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. exemplify this. Yet in many instances churches unite across denominational lines. Notable is the United Church of Canada. In it, in 1925, were joined the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches, but a Presbyterian Church in Canada continues. In the United States, among other examples, is the recent merging of the Congregational Christian Churches and the

Evangelical and Reformed Church into The United Church of Christ.

Some of the most significant church unions in the past six decades have occurred in Asia and in Africa. Among the earliest was the 1908 merger of Presbyterian and Congregational churches in the South India United Church. It, with English Methodists and Anglicans, in 1947 formed the Church of South India. Because of its inclusiveness, the Church of South India stands unique.

The United Church of Northern India in 1924 brought together Presbyterian and Congregational Churches. Soon—possibly in 1960-61—there is likely to emerge a Church of North India. It will probably include the old United Church as well as Methodists, Baptists, and Anglicans.

Geographical distances and economic problems have contributed to these separate unions in India. There is every reason to suppose that in a relatively short time, the Church of North India and the Church of South India will become one. If, as is likely, they do, Christians in India will be demonstrating in one sphere what God's calling to mission and unity has meant for them in Asia today.

Additional examples of church union include the Church of Christ in China, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, the Church of Christ in Thailand, the United Church of Christ in Japan (*Kyodan*), and the Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia.

Circumstances in Asia and Africa have made denominations acutely aware of their divisions. Many factors have been involved as some churches have united, but at their core these continuing unions represent theological obedi-

ence—obedience to the conviction that God's will for them is unity made visible in church union.

This in brief is the organized ecumenical structure. Each part is an evidence of the Ecumenical Movement. Yet that movement is much more than the sum total of these visible parts. It reaches beyond them. It is a movement of the Spirit of God.

## chapter 8

### ECUMENICAL REALITIES

**W**hat is the Ecumenical Movement? In reality it is neither organizations nor united churches. It is people in the world Christian community—and what happens to them as they respond to the leading of God's Spirit.

The Ecumenical Movement is reflected in the work of a Japanese missionary in Brazil, or in the spirit of a Roman monk giving help through Protestant channels for the care of the Protestant poor in Italy. It is seen again in the personal discovery of Christ by an American soldier worshiping in a Korean Christian community.

The Ecumenical Movement became most real for the late Bishop Eivind Berggrav when he was under Nazi imprisonment in Norway. A peasant woman slipped up to his prison window and whispered that her husband, listening to the forbidden BBC broadcast, had heard Archbishop William Temple in England praying for Berggrav. An ecumenical moment burst in full force for Martin Niemoeller in a tiny cell in Dachau Concentration Camp when he served as celebrant of the Lord's Supper for a few

fellow prisoners—Lutherans, Reformed, Anglicans, and Greek Orthodox.

The Ecumenical Movement involves a British missionary society's underwriting expenses for an Indian missionary in Africa so that he can do a job no Britisher could accomplish. It means the resettlement of Russian "Old Believers" from China in South America through the agency of the World Council of Churches. It includes a North American mission board's contributing to a common fund that an Asian may respond to the call of another Asian country.

The Ecumenical Movement is given meaning in the daily prayer of a Christian in Toronto for the church in China and in a Dallas congregation's eight-week vigil of prayer, twenty-four hours a day, for the life of the church in India. It is the daily prayers of thousands of Christians in their homes and in their churches for other thousands of Christians in lands they have never seen. It is Christian love, service, encounter, unity, and prayer.

The Ecumenical Movement is a meeting between persons—physically, or in the Spirit. It is a witness to reconciliation in Christ and unity in the Spirit. It involves human beings who know pain and suffering. It provides a foretaste of life in the kingdom of God.

From such meeting there have often developed organizations embodying the ecumenical spirit. To some of these larger and more tangible ecumenical realities we now turn.

#### NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCILS

In Asia, Africa, and Latin America national Christian councils evidence ecumenical concern at the national level. Once "missionary councils," most of these today are desig-

nated Christian councils or councils of churches. This is not mere name-changing. It reflects the strength of indigenous churches on these continents.

### *Their Work*

Despite widely varying circumstances, all these councils have common concerns and face similar problems. For churches and missions they serve as agencies of co-operation. They make possible comity arrangements among the churches to avoid overlapping and eliminate competition. They provide a national, interdenominational approach to the responsibilities of the church for youth, the Christian home, Christian medical work, welfare, and evangelism. International relief, Christian schools, missionary visas, and restrictions on Christians are frequent problems. Representing their members on these matters and speaking with one voice before governments, national Christian councils have become invaluable. Many—including those in Korea, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and India—have had to carry out extensive relief programs.

### *The National Christian Council of India*

India can serve as a case in point. That country gained its independence from Britain in 1947. Simultaneously, Pakistan was created out of territory that under British dominion had been part of India. Feelings were inflamed, and riots broke out. Thousands were killed. Muslims from India set out to cross into Pakistan. Hindus in Pakistan fled into India.

Within weeks, more than fifteen million people migrated. Passing in opposite directions along the roads, Hindus and

Muslims clashed. Hatreds flared in many cities. Carnage was frequent.

Into the midst of this large scale disaster moved the National Christian Council of India. It represented the Christian church. No denomination could have done what was needed. Hundreds of young Indian Christians volunteered and helped. Doctors and medical students from Christian hospitals moved into the disaster areas and often served around the clock. From Church World Service in the United States came cereal, used clothing, and medicines. These contributions were generous and indispensable, *but they were equaled by contributions from the churches of India.* Working together, Christians brought a unique ministry of service and reconciliation. They alone could be trusted by both sides in the conflict. In their united witness in service to the nation they found new unity. Since then in times of flood and earthquake, similar relief measures have been organized that have gained the gratitude of both Hindus and Muslims.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

Undergirding the national Christian councils is a larger body. It aids them in their work, unites them in world-wide fellowship, and enables them and the churches and missions they represent to plan their mission in terms of world needs. This is the International Missionary Council.

##### *Its Work*

A direct outgrowth of the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, 1910, the International Missionary Council (IMC) was led through its formative years by John R.

Mott, an American Methodist layman, and J. H. Oldham, a Scottish Presbyterian layman, later an Anglican.

The most significant of the IMC's accomplishments before and after World War I was the development, where they did not already exist, on each continent, of national Christian councils. In turn, the IMC became their agency of international co-operation. Through it, churches and missions of the West and those of Asia, Africa, and Latin America have counseled and worked together for four decades.

The IMC sends out no missionaries. This, it believes, is a responsibility of the churches. It is a consultative body for thinking and planning on a world scale. The results of its research and its best wisdom, arrived at cooperatively, are available to all. In this process of study and broad consultation, the IMC has convened five notable world conferences. These met at Jerusalem, Palestine, 1928; Madras, India, 1938; Whitby, Canada, 1947; Willingen, Germany, 1952; and Accra, Ghana, 1958.

### *Orphaned Missions*

Like the national Christian councils, the International Missionary Council in times of emergency also has had to step in with relief and service. This has occurred when only international resources and co-operation could meet the need. Yet the actual assistance has been carried out locally through the national Christian councils. Indeed, they are the International Missionary Council at work in any given area.

Such an emergency situation developed when World War II broke out. At that time German missionaries—not

to mention others from the Continent and from Scandinavia—at work overseas found themselves in dire straits. Cut off from Germany, they had no funds. Many faced internment. Yet throughout the war, the work of German missions remained remarkably intact. Other continental missions were sustained. How did it happen?

The story is one of ecumenical co-operation across warring lines. Unsolicited, a first gift of \$1,000 went from Scotland to the International Missionary Council to aid German missionaries. Scotland and Germany were at war, but here was evidence of Christian concern transcending the divisions of war. Almost simultaneously in Ceylon two village Christian women made a "matching" gift. On hearing that a nearby Danish missionary had been cut off without funds, they trudged over dusty roads to the missionary's house to give her a chicken and four cents. A thousand dollars and the widow's mite—expressions of ecumenical fellowship!

Thus it went throughout the war and into the 1950's. The Orphaned Missions Fund, for so it was known, was administered by the IMC. Without the Council, much that was done would have been impossible. In all, including Lutheran World Federation collections, more than \$11 million was contributed for and distributed to continental missions to maintain them during and after the war. Here was another evidence of world Christian community.

### *Special Current Responsibilities*

Today the IMC is pursuing several major concerns. It is engaged in a large-scale study of the life and work of Asian and African churches and of their relation to their

non-Christian neighbors. It is also encouraging new study of the non-Christian religions, and for this is aiding the development of overseas study centers.

The IMC has developed World Christian Books—a small library on the foundations of Christian life. Written by outstanding scholars in brief and simple form, these books are being translated into many tongues for use in churches on every continent. The Council also sponsors special work on Christian home and family life. This is highly important, because in some lands Christian family life provides one of the church's most effective instruments of evangelization.

Developing a more effective theological training for ministers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America has been a major project. After a decade of intensive study, the IMC in 1958 authorized the Theological Education Fund. A large Sealantic Fund gift and a matching contribution from eight denominational missionary boards made it possible. It now totals \$4 million, and efforts will be made to increase it. Charles W. Ranson gave up his post as Executive Secretary of the Council to become director of the Fund. It should greatly improve the training available to ministers in the non-Western world.

#### *Relations with the World Council of Churches*

Probably the IMC's greatest contribution through four decades has been to strengthen the newer churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The IMC has given them experience in world-wide co-operation and in assemblies where they have had an equal voice with Western churches. It has urged and enabled them in many ways to

make their own special contribution to the world Christian community. In all this it has helped to make the World Council of Churches truly a *world* council.

Since the World Council of Churches' founding in 1948, the IMC has been "in association with" it. On the basis of a decision made at Ghana in 1958, and now being considered by each IMC member body, it is reasonable to assume that the IMC will become an integral part of the World Council of Churches. If it does, this will occur at the next World Council Assembly to be held in New Delhi in 1961.

#### THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

As the prime symbol of the Ecumenical Movement, the World Council of Churches (WCC) has captured the imagination of churches and Christian people everywhere. Unlike the IMC, which is a council of *councils*, the WCC is a council of *churches*. Today more than 170 churches in more than fifty countries make up its membership.

##### *Its Work*

The World Council of Churches' headquarters is in Geneva, with a branch office in New York. The work of the council is vast—so vast that even a bare listing of all its activities and concerns would become tedious. Yet its major responsibilities can be summarized under four headings.

First, through the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees, the WCC reaches out to every part of the world. It serves on behalf of its member churches in the name of Jesus Christ. It has helped to resettle well

over two hundred thousand refugees in new homelands. It provides a continuing ministry to those who remain in refugee camps.

Second, through the Division of Ecumenical Action, the WCC conducts a youth program, sponsors many ecumenical work camps, and advances studies on the work and witness of Christian laymen. This Division also maintains the Ecumenical Institute, begun in 1946 at Bossey, near Geneva. Here in a setting of intellectual discipline and of related Bible study and worship, Christians of all races explore the meaning of the Christian gospel for their work and witness in the world.

Third, through its Division of Studies, the WCC calls upon the world's best minds to help analyze and suggest Christian approaches to the ever-new problems confronting the church. Under it, work of the Faith and Order Movement proceeds. This means engaging in continuing study and discussion those best able to help the churches meet constructively the theological differences that exist among them. With the IMC, the Division of Studies constantly explores the problems of the Christian mission and evangelism. It is also carrying out extensive study on the churches' responsibilities in areas of rapid social change. This latter can be illustrated by a brief example from Africa.

Mbono has lived all his life in a tribal village. Then one day, at the urging of labor recruiters and to earn a wage, he leaves to go to the city. There, uprooted like thousands of others, he lives in a slum and works in a modern factory. He has moved overnight from the stone age to the industrial age. Major upheavals result. How can the church

help Mbono and minister to his family? In turn, how does the church meet responsibly the problems of the newly emerging, often raw and violent, society that claims Mbono?

The church has a ministry to all areas of human need. That ministry must be effective. To make it so today for millions of people like Mbono gives compelling urgency to the WCC's exploration of Christian responsibility in areas of rapid social change.

Fourth, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs is jointly sponsored with the IMC. The Commission keeps the churches apprised of world problems that have a special relevance for the Christian faith. It provides for the churches an informed Christian appraisal of international affairs. It also makes known Christian principles to those responsible for shaping international policies.

#### *Member and Non-Member Churches*

Churches with very different structures and theologies have come together in the World Council of Churches. Among others, it includes the Society of Friends (Quakers), and the Salvation Army, Lutheran and Reformed bodies, the Anglican Communion, and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

The Roman Catholic Church takes no part in the Council's life. By its own definition it constitutes the one church. Therefore, "other churches" do not exist. For Rome to cooperate in a council with "other churches" would be to deny itself, although conceivably it could enter into relations with "societies of separated Christians." The Roman Catholic Church is quite aware of the WCC. Indeed, some

of the most penetrating studies on its social and theological significance have come from Roman Catholic scholars.

The Russian Orthodox Church in Russia thus far has not participated in the Council. Yet in 1958 it entered into discussion with the WCC, indicated its interest, and in 1959 sent observers to the WCC's Central Committee, meeting at Rhodes, Greece.

In the United States three major church groups remain outside the WCC. The largest is the Southern Baptist Convention. Much smaller are the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, and the Churches of Christ (not to be confused with the Christian Churches or Disciples of Christ). Except for these, the major non-Roman Christian churches of the world share in the life of the World Council of Churches.

### *Its Nature*

Although it has sometimes been mistakenly alleged, the WCC is not a super church. It is a council, a *council of churches*. It cannot legislate for any member church. It has no power over any member church. It can do only what its members entrust to it. The Council has no plan for church union, and it advocates no plan for church union. Neither does the Council represent nor encourage any one view of the nature of the church. Yet its very existence stands as a reminder of the church's essential unity.

The WCC is a fellowship of churches that confess "Jesus Christ as God and Savior" and together seek to meet human need throughout the world. Together they witness to Christ's Lordship over the church and the world. Together they seek prayerfully to be sensitive to the possible guiding

of the Holy Spirit into a fuller visible expression of that unity already given to the church.

In the long history of the church the WCC stands unique. It represents an acknowledged unity among the diverse Christian traditions. Never before has this unity been expressed so fully or made so visible. The World Council of Churches is not the Ecumenical Movement—it is but one expression of it. The WCC is not the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. Nor is it the final goal of ecumenical endeavor. It heartily rejects these misunderstandings. Yet the WCC is a new reality. It is a gift to the churches—a symbol of a new form of life in their midst.

## chapter 9

### IN ECUMENICAL MISSION

One of the largest North American mission boards—that of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.—refers to itself as being “in ecumenical mission.” Others speak increasingly of carrying out the mission in an ecumenical spirit.

What does it mean to be in ecumenical mission? Does it suggest national and overseas missions as usual, but with greater efforts toward new co-operation? Does it require one great international mission board through which all or many churches could work together? Or does it involve something quite different? There is only one frank response. The churches have no common, considered answer.

Some may refuse to recognize the fact, but in today's world the Christian mission proceeds in an ecumenical context. Most missionary planning in the International Missionary Council and the Division of Foreign Missions has been set within an ecumenical framework. Yet the churches and missionary agencies have not seriously faced what being in ecumenical mission means for themselves and their missionary endeavors.

*Uncertainty*

We confront an utterly new situation. Many of yesterday's familiar attitudes and methods are now inadequate. Worse—they are dangerous. They presuppose conditions that no longer exist. They ignore new facts. The changing mission continues, but missions are in difficult mid-passage.

We know where we have been. We know we are in transition. Yet we seem not to know with certainty where we ought to be, or how we should be moving to get there. Meanwhile, every new decision and step determine where we are going. This is part of the missionary problem today.

Let us be honest. The missionary movement is in a period of uncertainty. This need not bring despair, for it may mean new awareness that missions cannot proceed today as they did fifty years ago. It may indicate new willingness to seek the Spirit's leading. If so, this is all to the good.

God can use periods of hesitation to point the church to new obedience. Life itself is not one long succession of certainties. When the way ahead is not clear, to pause and reflect can bring new understanding. Without such reflection, effective, obedient response to God's will is impossible.

*Unused Knowledge*

In the past thirty-five years, through the International Missionary Council, the missionary agencies together have accumulated considerable wisdom concerning practical action within the ecumenical context. The North American boards in 1951 produced a sober study entitled, "Lessons from China." Although important, these "Lessons" con-

tained no major new suggestions not already enunciated in world missionary conferences between 1928 and 1947. Available wisdom too often has gone unheeded.

Before his death, John R. Mott, the great missionary statesman, pointed out the one major failure in the Christian missionary enterprise in the second quarter of the twentieth century—its refusal to take the step from knowledge to action. How can we expect God to lead us further until we have been obedient to that which already has been committed to us?

#### FROM WHERE HAVE WE COME?

“What does it mean to be in ecumenical mission?” To answer that question involves answering three others. First, from where have we come?

We have come a long way from the day when the Christian mission was understood in terms of a few Western missionaries scattered through the non-Western world with a little cluster of “native Christians” about them. The world Christian community is a community of churches. Moreover, in it the era of paternalism is past. Paternalism proved an insidious vice in which too many missions and missionaries were enmeshed. Non-Western churches resent—and resist as best they can—any evidence of Western paternalism.

We have also left behind in Asia and Africa the period of white Western domination. Often a white skin in those lands proves a disadvantage. It may make a person suspect. This creates a gulf, and for white missionaries makes difficult effective witness to the gospel. This is a major fact in the Christian world mission today.

*"Younger Churches"*

The above changes help to explain why the designation "younger churches" has fallen into disfavor. It includes those churches that arose from Western overseas missions in the past 150 years. Actually, some "younger churches" in Asia are older than some "older churches" in the West. A "younger" Lutheran Church was growing in India decades before the Methodist Church emerged in Britain and the United States. Several Protestant "younger churches" in Asia are older than the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S.A. The term's greatest offense resides in its signifying a relationship between unequals—between those who control the purse and those who receive its dole.

Thus far, no widely acceptable alternative has appeared for designating briefly, accurately, and collectively all these so-called "younger churches." "Sister churches," sometimes suggested, is good—if one goes on to append "in Asia, Africa, and Latin America." The writer suggests—despite certain inherent difficulties—"non-Western churches."<sup>1</sup> Just as "national" and "Asian" replace the hated "native" and "Asiatic" with their ring of imperial condescension, slight verbal alteration can mirror vast underlying change.

*"The Foreign Missionary"*

In much of the non-Western world the designations "missionary" or "foreign missionary" are highly unpopular. Many non-Christians see in the missionary a symbol of religious

<sup>1</sup> This allows the frequently used "Eastern Churches" to continue to designate the Orthodox Churches and related bodies.

and cultural superiority. Some non-Western Christians argue that he suggests ecclesiastical colonialism.

North Americans see the white missionary from one perspective. He is sent out and supported by a North American church. Many view him as one living a sacrificial and inspiring life. He makes known the good news among those who have never heard it.

Non-Western Christians view the white missionary from a totally different perspective. He symbolizes the West. He represents the real source of power in the church. His desires too often must be politely accommodated because through him comes much of the money needed for schools, hospitals, and churches. Here is a real problem in human relationships. For years, and with varying degrees of success, missionaries and nationals have tried to cope with it.

Many Christians in Asia, Africa, and Latin America increasingly see the word "missionary" in a paternal and colonial context. They want to put behind all signs of dependence and unequal relationship. Since 1948, although several have feared it, many non-Western churches have preferred to think of the World Council of Churches as their primary instrument of ecumenical expression rather than the International *Missionary* Council. Why hide these facts? They represent today some of the most potent realities confronting faithful fulfillment of the Christian world mission.

To meet this problem at least one North American board now calls its overseas missionaries "fraternal workers." Some are suggesting the use of "apostles," others "Christian ambassadors." Even designating the overseas Christian worker has become a problem.

Unaware of these changes, too many congregations continue to think of a pattern of missionary activity that was out-of-date forty years ago. To face these changes realistically is part of what it means to be in ecumenical mission. It also means acting decisively to meet the problems posed by the shifting tides in today's world.

### WHERE ARE WE NOW?

In appraising what it means to be in ecumenical mission, we ask a second question: where are we now? We cannot see our situation as will those who come after us, but we can look about and give our answer.

#### *End of the Missionary Era?*

Some affirm the end of the missionary era. We live now in the ecumenical age when missions are superseded. In the non-Western world churches exist, and they have responsibility for evangelizing their homelands. So goes the argument. To be sure, we have left behind the period when the pre-World War I pattern of foreign missions prevailed. The non-Western churches are established, in many lands evidence remarkable maturity, and have primary responsibility for evangelizing their own nations. Yet this truth can be grossly misinterpreted to mean that Western churches have fulfilled their overseas missionary obligations.

Primary responsibility does not necessarily imply sole ability. The non-Western churches are churches of full stature. They have taken their place within the world Christian community. Nevertheless, one must see them realistically as they are and the tasks they confront where God has set them.

Numerically, the non-Western churches are weak, very weak. In the countries of Asia, Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians together—except in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Korea—seldom represent as much as 2 per cent of the population. In some countries, such as Japan and Thailand, they represent .5 per cent or less of the population. Christians often exercise an influence out of all proportion to their numerical strength, but their relative size in a population traditionally non-Christian places severe limitations upon what they can do.

The contrast can be drawn sharply. In the United States there is at least one church member for each person outside the church. In India each Christian confronts forty non-Christians. Among Japan's 90 million people, each Christian faces two hundred non-Christians.

In the United States historical and cultural factors favor Christianity's growth. In India and Japan they hinder it. One needs also to recall that in the churches of Asia and Africa the bulk of the membership has come from depressed classes, outcaste people, or primitive and tribal peoples. Among these folk education is very limited. Their economic level is quite low. Some, as in India and Pakistan, are bitterly poor. When looking for work, Christians often face discrimination.

All this influences the kind of church and related institutional life these Christians can support. It affects the amount and extent of their evangelistic outreach. This is not the whole story, but in the midst of enormous populations to be evangelized—two-thirds of the world has not professed the Christian faith—the churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America need major shoulder to shoulder help

from sister churches in the West. To impute to non-Western churches a strength they do not have is disastrous.

Consider the Church of South India. It is one of the great Protestant churches in Asia. In the ability of its leaders and in the evangelistic zeal of its congregations, it can stand comparison with any church in the world. In some areas it is in large measure self-supporting. It is sending out several missionaries overseas. Yet consider the size of its task and its severely limited resources for meeting that task.

The Church of South India has a Christian community of 1.25 million. It lives among a non-Christian population of 125 million. It may be said to have primary responsibility for evangelizing those in its area. Yet, its leaders acknowledge, this is not to say the Church of South India is alone adequate to meet all the demands its task lays upon it. Rich in spirit, the Church of South India lives its life in an environment that calls for supplemental resources if the Christian church there is to fulfill its mission.

### *Non-Western Churches and Missionaries*

The non-Western churches want not fewer but more missionaries. Why? As they have become autonomous or have taken over more and more control of their own life, they have been able to see themselves and their responsibilities in a new light. The autonomous church can visualize itself standing alone with no Christian helpers from the outside. It may see as never before the vast evangelistic task stretching before it. The outcome is likely to be twofold: first, a realistic appraisal of its limitations resulting in part from its relatively few well-trained leaders; and second, a recogni-

tion of its need for supplemental aid both in personnel and finance.

Today the churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America want more missionaries *from non-Western lands*. Yet as they begin to look for the missionary helpers they most want, they confront a fundamental reality—the law of supply and demand. The non-Western churches have few people to spare for overseas work. Confronted by an almost overwhelming task, they turn, once again, to the churches of North America, for here is the largest reservoir of potential missionary helpers. Yet this is a painful choice. *More* white missionaries symbolize dependence upon the West. They suggest a continuing colonial situation. Their presence seems to give substance to the taunts of the non-Christians that Christianity is, after all, a Western religion.

The frequently expressed wish for non-Western missionary helpers means something. Non-Western churches want to show their countrymen, first, that the center of the faith is not the West. The center of the faith is Jesus Christ. Second, they wish to make clear that the true base of the Christian mission is neither the West nor a Western church. It is the world-wide church.

Let us try to enter into the situation of a non-Western church. Think of an area in Pakistan where twelve missionaries are at work. All are white and Western. Their presence reinforces an oft-repeated charge: Christianity is the religion of well-to-do white Westerners. It is an alien faith in Asia.

Now imagine the situation in that same area if four of the twelve missionaries were from Asia—perhaps a Japanese, a Korean, a Filipino, and an Indonesian. Picture two as from

Africa and two from Latin America. Think of four of them as from the West, among whom perhaps one or two would be non-white—a Negro, a Nisei, or a Chinese-American. What then of the charge that Christianity is the Western white man's religion? What would happen in the minds of people as they saw the world in microcosm, made one in Christ and bearing witness in their midst to the gospel?

To be sure, this kind of international team could be developed now only in a few pilot projects. But the important thing for every North American Christian to do is to try to imagine his own reaction and response to each of the two kinds of missionary situations if he were a non-Christian Asian. He would then understand what the non-Western churches face constantly. Most of them are *burdened* with an all white missionary contingent. They have little hope of altering this.

North American missionaries today are more requested and less desired than ever before. Those North Americans—young adults and the increasing number of people of middle years—who are called to overseas service and who can meet its demands with patience and understanding are urgently needed. The “missionary sacrifices” are not what most North Americans imagine them to be. They are primarily the kind of sacrifices that one has to make in all his relationships with other people where he is suspect or frequently not desired. These can be made meaningful only in Christian humility. Is it too much to suggest (and the very asking is a judgment) that this newly arisen situation poses a missionary challenge of the first magnitude to Latin, Oriental, and Negro American Christians?

Understanding and patience are required not only of

the missionary but also of the church in whose midst he works. Desiring non-Western helpers, yet so desperate for assistance that they accept even more white missionaries from the West, these churches face an uneasy situation, too. With an exclusively Western missionary group in their midst, they confront problems among their fellow countrymen that few Westerners can appreciate. Today a non-Western church requires real Christian grace to call another Western missionary to its service. Western churches that would fulfill their missionary task within its full ecumenical dimension confront a great deal of re-planning and re-thinking.

### *Interdependence*

Fifty years ago Western churches found it difficult to think of themselves as working in any real way as yoke-mates with the churches in the non-Western world. Twenty-five years ago the distinction between "older churches" and "younger churches" became current. So rapid has been the growth in maturity of the "younger churches" that for more than a decade even that distinction has been seen to be inadequate.

At the International Missionary Council's 1947 Whitby Conference, Western and non-Western churches together saw that they were called by God into an obedient partnership. That partnership requires equality, not in numbers or financial resources, but in commitment to the God-given mission. This meant and continues to mean an ecumenical march—the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world.

At the Whitby sessions, the non-Western churches were

urged to put behind them forever any sense of dependence upon the Western churches. Yet they were not asked to achieve absolute independence or self-sufficiency. Therein is revealed another of the treasures disclosed to the churches in ecumenical fellowship. Within the world Christian community no church—racial, national, territorial, or denominational—can be self-sufficient. Western and non-Western churches alike must become so strong in their spiritual life and its outward manifestations that they can move *beyond* independence into the larger maturity of full interdependence.

The gifts and treasures committed by the Holy Spirit to the several churches must be shared in community for the mutual edification and upbuilding of all. As Lesslie Newbigin has reminded us, because of human limitations we can grasp the full range of the gospel's riches only when we hear the gospel from one another—Asian from African, and North American from Asian—and experience it in the fullness of our Christian diversity. Is this not in essence what Paul had envisioned in the diverse gifts of the Christian upbuilding the one body that is the church?

There are new realities in the Christian mission. There is re-orientation. Those who would strengthen the church in its total world mission must with humility of spirit and consecrated daring enter the new day of ecumenical mission.

#### WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Where are we going? "Into all the world together" is both our goal and the means by which we hope to reach it. Into all the *world* expresses mission. Together conveys unity.

There is mission that is not ecumenical. We speak of ecumenical mission and mean by it mission that is complete—it is carried out “at home” and in the uttermost parts of the earth. It is conducted within the framework of the world Christian community and has constantly before it the unity that belongs to Christ’s church.

There is unity that is not ecumenical. Ecumenical unity always has mission as its end. It is unity seen in the context of embracing within the church’s life the rich diversity of all the earth’s peoples. This is the sum and substance of ecumenical mission.

To be *in* ecumenical mission is not to suggest that any Protestant church in its missionary outreach can be *an* ecumenical mission. The fullness of the word “ecumenical” precludes this. Being *in* ecumenical mission means being part of a transnational and transdenominational worldwide mission.

For North American missionary agencies, being *in* ecumenical mission means acknowledging that a denominational foreign mission board sending white missionaries to Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the traditional way, and thinking solely or primarily of extending its own denomination, is obsolete. The day for racially and denominationally limited missions has passed.

Ecumenical mission involves the realignment of a part (the denomination) in relation to the whole (the church). It is as simple—and as profound—as the shift from a denomination’s saying “our mission work” to its saying “our share in the Christian world mission.”

Where are we going? What lies ahead? One thing is clear. We are not moving with vigorous certainty toward our goal.

Yet God calls us forward. In response some among the churches are exploring and employing new patterns of work. In the following pages we shall look at several of these.

A word of caution. In the years immediately before us, Christian missions in some areas may enjoy little "success." Indeed, they may experience some major upheavals and reverses. If such comes to pass, many North American congregations could readily despair and say, "What's the use?" Yet there is a profound sense in which Christians need not, indeed, *must not*, be concerned—and this is difficult for North Americans—with numbers, or "success," or "failure." They must only be sure that they are actively serving the mission in mature obedience to the leading of the Spirit.

God did not call his people in mission to be successful. He called them to be faithful. Who, looking on from the outside 1900 years ago, would have judged the *one* mission fulfilled in perfect faith and obedience to be "successful"? To men it looked like defeat. In God's providence it became the hope of the world. We are called only to faithful, obedient mission in the world as it is or may be. All the rest—the outcome—we leave with God.

## chapter 10

### NEW PATTERNS OF MISSION

#### Part One

In the Christian mission's new day, in what ways is ecumenical concern appearing? There are many, and to cite all would necessitate a catalog listing. We shall, instead, select and amplify some that best reflect the present response of the churches.

#### CONTINUING PATTERNS OF CO-OPERATION

As in past decades, so today, an enormous amount of mission work proceeds through national councils, union enterprises, and co-operative endeavors.

#### *Education*

Missionary co-operation has been evident for years in educational institutions. These range from primary schools to universities and professional training institutions. Like many others, India's Isabella Thoburn College, begun in 1886, is jointly sponsored. More recently North American churches have helped to make possible the Japan International Christian University. China's closing in 1950, the

flood of refugee students in Hong Kong, and the many Chinese on Taiwan posed new needs. Missionary agencies co-operated to open Chung Chi College in Hong Kong in 1950 and Tunghai University in Taichung, Taiwan, in 1954-55.

Similar co-operative endeavors can be seen in theological education. Chartered in 1827, India's jointly supported Serampore Theological College is the oldest Protestant theological seminary in Asia. Through it, graduates of all other Indian seminaries receive their B.D. degrees. Union Theological Seminary in Manila, Tokyo Theological Seminary, and Union Theological Seminaries in Buenos Aires and Mexico City provide other instances of co-operation in theological education. The interdenominational Nanking Theological Seminary Board of Founders, no longer able to help in China, is assisting theological training institutions in Southeast Asia.

### *Medical Work*

Union hospitals and medical training centers are also conspicuous. Thirty-nine societies in six countries help to support Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital in South India. Begun in 1918, it is the lengthened shadow of Dr. Ida Scudder. In North India, Ludhiana Christian Medical College also has international support. Missionary agencies in Canada, the United States, and Australia co-operate to maintain Severance Union Medical College and Hospital, now a part of Yonsei University, in Seoul, Korea. It graduated its first class in 1908.

United States, British, and Swedish missions make possible the Protestant Medical Institute at Kimpese, Belgian

Congo. The Institute trains medical workers—nurses, midwives, and laboratory technicians. When more adequate educational preparation is available for the Congolese, and when they are allowed to serve in the higher ranks of the medical profession, the Institute may be upgraded. Of the relatively few Negro Africans who have medical degrees, most obtain them in Europe, Britain, or North America.

### *Relief*

Through Church World Service, churches in the U.S.A. work together to meet emergency and continuing relief needs. Earthquakes, floods, famines, epidemics, war—in short, any disaster that brings widespread human suffering—calls Church World Service into action. It works closely with the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees of the World Council of Churches.

These are but a few examples of the many long established patterns of missionary co-operation. They are important, and they continue. We turn now to some more recently developed enterprises that reflect ecumenical response to new needs.

### LITERACY AND LITERATURE

Through the Division of Foreign Missions' Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature, thirty-nine North American church agencies co-operate to teach scores of thousands in more than fifty countries to read and write. The Committee has effectively used the Laubach "Each One Teach One" method for spreading literacy.

The languages of many newly literate people have but recently been reduced to writing, almost without excep-

tion by missionaries. Obviously where no literature has existed, someone must produce something to read. The Committee has helped to prepare and provide good reading material in 250 languages. Today in the non-Western world, adult and literacy education are major tasks confronting the church. Through the Committee and its British counterpart, the churches are working in all the world together to meet this vast need.

Significantly, the Committee is now placing greatly increased emphasis upon raising up a large and well trained national leadership—men and women who can produce, write, edit, publish, and distribute the illustrations, magazines, and books non-Western Christians (many of them new literates) need and crave. First class, locally produced Christian educational and religious literature is desperately needed.

For a decade in the journalism department of Hislop Christian College in India, Asian Christians have been able to get training in journalistic writing from some of the best Asian and Western teachers of journalism. In Egypt Literacy House at Minia has become the source of literacy campaigns throughout the Nile Valley. These have brought renewed life to village churches by making Bible study possible and have created considerable local action for village improvement. Literacy House also provides a demonstration center for literacy workers from many lands.

Perhaps the most striking recent development was the opening in 1959 of the Africa Literacy and Writing Center at Kitwe, Northern Rhodesia. Through local African and missionary initiative, Kitwe is on its way to becoming Africa's ecumenical training center—like Bossey in Switzer-

land. The Writing Center resulted from requests that had come from many areas. The First All-Africa Church Conference at Ibadan in 1958 invited Western churches to undertake the needed steps. The Center is the first operating unit of the projected African ecumenical training institute. To it come Africans for training in teaching literacy, in writing, and in communicating effectively the gospel through today's mass media. Here is the heart-center for all literacy and literature work—and it is considerable—in Negro Africa. This dramatic example of a key Christian enterprise for a whole continent is a working reality only because churches are in mission together.

#### RADIO AND VISUAL EDUCATION

Today, and nowhere more than in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, radio has become a powerful agent in spreading the gospel. Radio makes a difference! It enables more people now to hear the Christian gospel in one day than heard it during the first three centuries of Christianity's spread.

Throughout the non-Western world live tens of thousands who are curious about the gospel. Social pressures keep them from any Christian gathering. Yet in their homes they can and do listen by radio to the Christian proclamation. Short wave radio overcomes many obstacles. Through it the gospel can be heard by people in isolated mountains and valleys, on remote islands, and behind man-made barriers. Through it millions have heard the gospel for the first time.

The Radio, Visual Education, and Mass Communications Committee of the Division of Foreign Missions of the

National Council of Churches (RAVEMCCO) provides an agency of international co-operation for many mission boards in the United States and Canada. Its interests range from high powered short wave transmitters, television, and the production of color and sound motion picture films to kerosene lighted projection machines for areas where there is no electricity. It also helps people to produce the best possible flannelgraphs, puppets, and simple pictures where these can make the most effective Christian impact.

One of its related stations, HLKY in Seoul, Korea, covers an area of some two hundred miles. Over it the Christian message is broadcast regularly into North Korea. Surveys show that, except for the Government radio station, HLKY is the "most listened to station in the capital." To increase its impact, ninety battery radios—"portable pastors"—have been distributed to village churches. People cluster around these radios daily to hear good music, drama, and

RAVEMCCO also assists the Evangelical Audio-Visual the gospel. They listen receptively.

Center in Brazil, which yearly produces some two thousand Protestant radio programs. It is responsible for Station DYSR in the Philippines, "The Voice of Christian Brotherhood," and hopes to make it "The Christian Voice of South-east Asia." RAVEMCCO is also developing a widespread radio and visual education service in Africa. It should be noted that the radio outreach of non-DFM agencies is greater than that described here.

councils in Thailand, Burma, and India, in radio and film

RAVEMCCO also works closely with national Christian evangelism. India's Christian film and filmstrip productions reach thousands of villagers. Most are non-Christians, but

they watch avidly as the great Bible stories unfold before their eyes. Indian filmstrips on Christian stewardship have been used with telling effect throughout the Philippines.

Japan's Christian Audio-Visual Center surpasses all others in the non-Western world. With thirty-two full time workers (seven have master's degrees), it raises three-fifths of its budget in Japan. It produces Christian programs for commercial and government radio and TV stations. These bring an average of one hundred persons each month to church for the first time. All Japan's major cities have at least one television station, and Tokyo has six. The Center has gained considerable experience in using television to spread the Christian gospel.

The Center is also becoming a focal point for audio-visual research, distribution of information, and the export of equipment and materials for use in Asia. It sends taped radio programs to Okinawa. Through summer courses, it has trained more than 2,600 persons in audio-visual techniques. With this agency of Japan's National Christian Council, RAVEMCCO works closely.

#### ECUMENICAL TRAINING

Ecumenical training and experience are available to increasing numbers of people. What are the new opportunities? To whom are they available?

#### *Junior Year Abroad*

In 1953, what is now the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. began its "Junior Year Abroad." The purpose? To give youth opportunity for meaningful study abroad

and firsthand experience of the Christian world mission outside their homeland.

Presbyterian students or students in Presbyterian colleges who qualify—high grades are required—may study in France, Switzerland, Lebanon, Germany, Hong Kong, at Isabella Thoburn College in India, at Japan International Christian University, at Silliman University in the Philippines, and at the University of Mexico. Informal overseas Christian ambassadors, they live in Christian homes or dormitories and share through the bulletin *Invisible Bridges*.

At present fifty Junior Year Abroad students study overseas annually. Each carries a full academic program, participates in the local student Christian group, and shares in the life of the national church. Each student visits in Christian and non-Christian homes and participates in an ecumenical work camp. On return, these students help interpret Christianity's world mission to campus groups and local churches. Other denominations are also developing similar projects. The Methodists' International Christian Youth Exchange serves high school young people.

### *Crusade Scholars*

To meet the needs of certain Methodist youths outside North America, The Methodist Church developed its Crusade Scholarship Program. Since its inception in 1944, approximately 1,200 Crusade Scholars from fifty-six nations, most of them in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, have had advanced study outside their own countries. Many have come to the United States, but others have gone to such countries as Austria, Brazil, India, the Philippines, and Switzerland.

These young Christians are agriculturists, architects, chemists, economists, engineers, lawyers, medical doctors, musicians, nurses, pastors, pharmacists, and teachers. Almost without exception, they complete college in their homelands, and as Crusade Scholars begin their graduate work abroad. When they return, many achieve prominence in non-church related professions. Others find their life's work within the church and provide it with some of its best trained leaders. Here again other churches have similar programs.

#### *Training Outside the United States*

Long periods of study in the United States sometimes make it difficult for young people from other countries to re-adjust to their own culture. The great contrast in living standards is a major reason. To meet this problem many missionary agencies have looked with growing favor on using the non-Western world's outstanding Christian educational institutions.

With mission support, some Thai and Iranian Christian nurses have taken training in India. Asian educators from several lands now study at Japan International Christian University. American scholarships have made it possible for Christian students from Egypt and the Sudan to take university training in Lebanon. An African from the Cameroun has gained audio-visual training in Brazil.

The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. now provides an increasing budget for such inter-church scholarships to be used outside the United States. Methodists and others are also encouraging this kind of educational exchange.

The Board of Foreign Missions of the United Lutheran Church in America follows this new policy: when a national Christian requires advanced training that is not available in his own land, he is to study, if possible, in a country with a similar culture. A young Christian from British Guiana may find it difficult to obtain a higher education in his homeland. The United Lutheran Church in America will enable him to attend Inter-American University in Puerto Rico. If after graduation there he should wish to enter the ministry, he goes to Waterloo Lutheran Seminary in Canada. During each long summer vacation, he returns to British Guiana. In this way he can keep in touch with his people and his church. A similar program for college graduates is now in operation in Liberia.

### *Senior Pastors*

In 1958 the Methodist Board of Missions launched a training experiment. It brought to the United States ten senior pastors from seven countries of Asia and Africa. During the spring they attended special seminary classes. During the summer they participated in youth institutes and pastors' schools.

In the fall each man went as associate pastor to a church most nearly corresponding to his own. A Japanese pastor and university chaplain was assigned to Columbus, the home of Ohio State University. A Chinese minister from Singapore worked in a large city church in Atlanta, Georgia. An African rural pastor served in a Lexington, Virginia, larger parish. Such a program not only aids both non-Western pastors and North American congregations, but also brings a greater spirit of co-operation between the two.

*The Meadville Program*

Today missionaries require an extra measure of special training. Annually since 1953, the Division of Foreign Missions has held a six-week summer course at Allegheny College, Meadville, Pennsylvania, for new missionaries. About 125 people from twelve or more denominations attend.

The new missionaries do not study any specific language but spend three weeks in linguistic classes. Here they discover the best ways to learn a new language and also the problems involved in presenting the Christian faith in a tongue that has no precise equivalents for the Christian words "God," "love," and "forgiveness."

For three weeks participants study intensively the contemporary Christian mission and its relation to the area in which they will be working. Bible study continues throughout the course. Those enrolled are registered nurses, teachers, agriculturists, medical doctors, architects, and seminary graduates.

Meadville provides new missionaries with several unusual experiences. They come to know world renowned scholars especially invited for the course and also Christian nationals with whom they will be working overseas. They also often make lasting friendships with those from other denominations who will be missionary colleagues. These can have important long range consequences.

For years North American missionaries, after completing their professional training, have been taking special language and area studies. For this they may go to the University of California, the University of Chicago, Vanderbilt, Yale, the Kennedy School of Missions in Hartford, or the

Canadian School of Missions in Toronto. Yet in today's changing world, the churches' reassessment of their mission suggests that an added dimension is needed in training.

### *Study Fellowship*

The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. provides an example of this new training. Following the Meadville Conference, its missionary candidates travel to a large American city where the "inner city" is in social and cultural upheaval. In his own homeland the new missionary sees the church amid the problems of inter-racial tensions, marginal living, labor strife, and slum clearance. In an American city and with national colleagues from overseas—sometimes those with whom he later will be working—he calls in the homes of people of other races and religions. He discovers that the essential task is little different in New York, Detroit, Chicago, or Los Angeles from what it is in Buenos Aires, Johannesburg, Bombay, or Tokyo.

He spends the fall at the Presbyterians' Ecumenical Training Center, Stony Point, New York. Here Study Fellowship members, against the summer's background, seek new insight into the Biblical basis of the Christian mission in an ecumenical era. In addition to Bible study, there are lectures and seminars over the whole range of problems that confront the missionary today. Visiting speakers from Roman Catholicism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Marxism testify to the vitality of their own faith as over against the Protestant Christianity of the missionary candidates. The involvement and instruction are remarkably complete. The superb collection of current source materials provided for the candidates' study is unique.

## Part Two

Despite widespread belief to the contrary, the church's mission is not fulfilled by professional missionaries in national and overseas missions. The work of such folk is an indispensable part of the total Christian mission. It is not the whole mission.

The Apostle Paul had no mission board support. He maintained himself by his trade, tent making. In Christianity's first three centuries, very few were missionaries in the way in which Paul was a missionary. Yet the church spread steadily in the Mediterranean world through the work and daily witness of Christian men and women going on their appointed way with committed purpose.

The most rapidly growing churches today, in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, are expanding primarily through the daily witness of farmers, shoemakers, traveling vendors, teachers, and others. These are the laity—the people of God—in Christian mission.

Islam spreads in Africa through Muslim lay witness. The Muslim trader in Negro Africa sets up shop in the open air. Several times each day, where all can see, he kneels, bows towards Mecca, and prays. He speaks freely about the faith of Islam with those among whom he moves. To the African, this Muslim is not a paid professional. He is an ordinary man whose faith is so meaningful that he wants others to know about it. Such witness makes a tremendous impact! What is true for Islam is also true for Christianity.

## CHRISTIAN LAYMEN OVERSEAS

For a decade China has been closed to Christian missionaries. Restrictions elsewhere could develop. The Christian mission in some areas may have to be carried on only through the witness of committed lay Christians. Such conditions may or may not come to pass, but one thing is clear: the unfinished task overseas far exceeds the resources of the present missionary staff plus the entire membership of the non-Western churches.

North American Christians now live, work, serve, study, and travel overseas—a whole host of them! Whether or not these soldiers, teachers, oilmen, and tourists realize it, they are missionaries. Non-Westerners judge Christianity by their lives. The churches are awakening to the missionary potential in this far-flung force and increasing efforts are being made to utilize it effectively.

*Americans Abroad*

How many North Americans are overseas? No one knows for sure. But Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs has made a careful survey.<sup>1</sup> In 1957, the United States Government employed some 39,500 of its citizens in foreign countries. American corporations employed at least 24,500 United States citizens overseas. They were widely distributed—10,500 in Latin America, well over 5,000 in the Near East and North Africa, more than 3,200 in the Far East, less than 500 in Negro Africa, and 5,000 in Europe and Canada. Moreover, stu-

<sup>1</sup> Cleveland, Harlan and Mangone, Gerard J., eds., *The Art of Overseasmanship*. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1957.

dents, teachers and scholars, and employees of international and voluntary agencies swelled the total.

Exclusive of wives and children, at least 79,000 American civilians worked or studied abroad in 1957. Also more than 31,000 American missionaries, Protestant and Roman Catholic, served overseas.

There is more. Some thirty thousand United States citizens travel abroad each year on business trips. Foreign business concerns and governments also employ Americans outside the United States. Considerably more than one million United States troops were stationed overseas in 1957. This figure does not include wives or dependents. Moreover, and exclusive of those who travel into Mexico (five hundred thousand yearly) and Canada, probably more than one and one-half million Americans go abroad annually as tourists.

Counting all who work or travel abroad, there are each year more than three million United States citizens overseas. Forty per cent are likely to be located in one area for more than a year. Only one in one hundred is a missionary sent by a church. Yet every American overseas—by what he says and does, by where he goes—*influences* positively or negatively the church's mission.

What can Americans overseas do as *Christians*? They can show Christian integrity in all relationships with others. They can demonstrate a Christian attitude toward people of color. They can seek out and share in the life of the church where they are. If resident, they can join in local community projects. They can maintain an open Christian home in which non-Christians are welcome and in which they can see how a Christian family lives—its relationships

and attitudes, grace before meals, and family devotions. In some Christian homes overseas small Bible study groups meet regularly. Some non-Christians, even with no intention of becoming Christian, are interested in Bible study.

Does his faith in Allah mean more to the Arab trader in Central Africa than his faith in the God and Father of Jesus Christ means to the North American Christian overseas? The latter confronts difficulties. Language, wealth, and company policy may pose barriers. These must be faced. Yet the Christian layman overseas is neither a full time missionary in disguise, nor a part time professional after working hours. Rather he is one who acknowledges that in all he does, he is part of the Christian mission. His Christian conviction shows through.

One approach to the problem of lay witness abroad is provided by the Co-operative Committee on Ministry to Service Personnel Overseas. It seeks to bring servicemen and nationals together under Christian auspices. Other efforts are those of World Neighbors and The Koinonia Foundation. The latter seeks to place Christian laymen such as educators, engineers, and agriculturalists in posts abroad. On the national level little has been done in response to this problem but as the following chapter shows, pastors, congregations, and local councils of churches can help.

#### *Institute on Overseas Churchmanship*

Early in 1959 the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. held its first Institute on Overseas Churchmanship. Among the forty present were a doctor and his wife going to Iran, a nurse, a teacher, an architectural engineer who works in Korea, and a State Department employee. A week

is not long. Yet, as the Institute showed, it is time enough through lectures, seminars, and study for a Christian layman to learn some of the problems and difficulties to be faced living among another people. He can discover what the uniqueness of the Christian faith means. He can get information on the church where he is going. He can learn how to make an effective Christian witness in his profession.

Such was the response to the first Institute that the Presbyterians plan three similar Institutes for 1960. They are also publishing a study book for use in these sessions.

#### *Oversea Service*

In 1953, to train layman for responsible Christian living abroad, the British Council of Churches and the Conference of British Missionary Societies launched Oversea Service. Its governing committee now also includes representatives from industry and government. Oversea Service is frankly Christian. Its aim is "training for responsible partnership abroad." No more than twenty are admitted to its courses, which extend from four to eight days and concentrate on single areas such as India, the Caribbean, and tropical Africa.

Oversea Service courses aim to acquaint British workers going abroad with the vast scale of the revolution in our world. They seek to prepare committed Christians to fulfill their commitment overseas. And they encourage those with no Christian interest to realize that overseas thousands regard them as representative Christians.

In the first five years of Oversea Service, its courses enrolled nearly 1,400 persons. In 1957-58, it trained more than 460 persons. Each year more people enroll than did

the year before. More than 90 per cent of them are government or business employees. Many companies, such as General Electric, Ltd. and Shell Petroleum, pay their employees' tuition and also contribute directly to the continuing budget of Oversea Service.

Oversea Service has been steadily expanding its scope. It not only trains those going abroad, but also arranges for Christian persons overseas to meet new trainees on arrival and help them become part of the church life there. It provides refresher courses for those who return to England for a brief period. Another development is pending. Out of the interest of the missionary societies and many who have had Oversea Service training, there may "grow a voluntary society that would be essentially lay, ecumenical, and missionary—in the best and widest sense of these words."<sup>1</sup>

#### A UNITED, INTERNATIONAL MISSION

Stretching five hundred miles along the northeastern shoulder of India and touching Tibet, Nepal had been closed to Christians for nearly two hundred years, but after 1950 it cautiously opened its door. Christian medical service provided the key. Behind this development stands a remarkable story. A "Point Four" government team of convinced Christians in Nepal, a literacy project requested by the government and operated under Christian auspices, and an American missionary who pursued his hobby of ornithology on Nepal's mountainous slopes worked in their separate ways to overcome the country's fear of Christians.

When word first came that a mission could enter Nepal,

<sup>1</sup> H. B. T. Holland, general secretary of Oversea Service and a medical doctor, formerly a missionary in South Asia.

those concerned decided that the response should be a united one. Out of discussions with the National Christian Council of India, the United Christian Mission to Nepal was formed in March, 1954. Co-operating in it are seventy-five workers, from thirteen churches and missions in eight countries. Some represent missions that do not usually join with established, co-operating groups, and twenty-eight workers are either Indian or Nepalese.

The United Mission views itself as a temporary agency until such time as the Church of Christ in Nepal can be organized to undertake the mission to its own people. From the start it has planned for one church in Nepal. The work progresses. Its major thrust now is medical and educational.

#### CHRISTIANITY IN INDIAN SOCIETY

Asian churches require every help in understanding their environment and responding to its problems with informed Christian vigor. To meet this need the churches of India in the early 1950's founded what is now the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society. Nine churches and three all-India Christian organizations support its work. One or two research fellows from universities in North America or Great Britain are usually associated with the Institute's staff in Bangalore.

Several times each year, the Institute convenes consultations throughout India to consider social and religious questions. It publishes reports on these study conferences. It produces the scholarly quarterly *Religion and Society*. Recent issues have dealt with ethical problems involved in foreign aid, the changing pattern of family life, the Christian approach to renascent Hinduism, and caste in church

and nation. The Institute also enlists India's best Christian minds to prepare books needed by the churches in a rapidly changing society.<sup>1</sup> Underlying all the Institute's concerns is the Biblical witness. Some Christian observers regard the Institute as one of the most significant emergents in the life of the non-Western churches.

#### REGIONAL CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATION

In the past strong bonds have tied North American churches to those of Burma or to those in the Philippines. Yet between the churches of Burma and the Philippines the bonds of community have been weak. This same exclusive, bilateral relationship has existed between North American and African churches and between North American and Latin American churches. In the world Christian community this has at times produced a strange, lop-sided imbalance.

#### *All-Africa Church Conference*

Regional Christian unity is growing. Bilateral relationships are being replaced with multilateral ones. The churches of Asia now work closely with one another. African churches soon will be doing so.

In January, 1958, at Ibadan, Nigeria, African Christians for the first time came together in the All-Africa Church Conference. They discovered one another as fellow African Christians. In the process, they discarded many earlier mis-

<sup>1</sup> *Communism and the Social Revolution in India* (1954); *Cultural Foundations of Indian Democracy* (1955); *Religious Freedom* (1956); *The Human Person, Society, and State* (1957); *Community Development in India's Industrial Urban Areas* (1958) are some representative titles.

taken notions—some inherited from divided mission effort—they had held about each other. They also took a decisive step. They appointed a Continuation Committee to carry on the work of the Conference, to foster Christian unity among Africans, and perhaps to create an African Christian Council.

The Christian church must always be local. Yet it can never be "only local." In its local setting, it must evidence its ecumenical dimension. This is often difficult. The great ecumenical gatherings and organizations often seem far removed from the local congregation. Thus, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the growing sense of regional ecumenical involvement may meet a deep need.

#### *East Asia Christian Conference*

Regional ecumenicity has developed most fully in Asia. The East Asia Christian Conference (EACC), begun in 1957, illustrates it.

The EACC must be viewed against its background. At Madras in 1938, the International Missionary Council explored the possibility of a Far Eastern office. Then came World War II. Later the National Christian Councils of China and India reopened the matter. In 1949 the Eastern Asia Christian Conference at Bangkok resulted.

Following a Bangkok Conference suggestion, the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council appointed Rajah B. Manikam, then a secretary of the NCC of India, as their Joint East Asia Secretary. Manikam's job was liaison. His work stimulated a sense of unity among Asian churches.

Meeting at Hong Kong in the summer of 1955, Asian

churches formed the Asia Council on Ecumenical Mission. It embodied strong regional unity, Asian desire to assume a larger share in the Christian mission, and belief that missionary funds should come from an ecumenical treasury. The Council sought to adjust the imbalance of the old bilateral relationships. Its first contribution was \$5,000 (Hong Kong) from a Chinese business man, and was used to send a Filipino nurse to Thailand.

In March, 1957, at Prapat, Indonesia, the young Council became the East Asia Christian Conference. Represented there were the Christian churches of Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya and Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Japan. South Vietnam and Hong Kong sent observers. Only China was missing. Present as consultants were a handful of Western churchmen, including Australian and New Zealand representatives who left as special members of the EACC.

Asia contains more than half the world's people. At Prapat, Asia's churches had assembled. What a theme they chose!—*The Common Evangelistic Task of the Churches in East Asia.*

Prapat is set in the midst of the strong and growing Batak Church of Sumatra. Less than 130 years ago the Bataks had killed missionaries who sought to proclaim the gospel among them. Today the Batak Church is among the strongest in Asia. It has thrived with very little Western help. By living its life in mission, it has won a majority of the Batak people.

Batak congregations were in continuous prayer for the conference. They gave generously that it might be held. As hosts, they opened it with their own *Kirchentag*. By nine

o'clock on the first morning, more than one hundred thousand had assembled for the great event. Known for their musical ability, the Bataks sing gloriously—great German chorales or Batak melodies. Their five hundred voice youth choir thrilled all who were present.

In a Sumatra town, surrounded by lush, green, tropical rain forests, Christ's church in Asia was made visible. Who, seeing Batak cannibals there one hundred years earlier, could have conjured up such a sight? Yet in just such remotely obscure—but to the eye of faith wondrously thrilling—ways are God's mighty acts and his purpose disclosed in history.

A study conference on rapid social change had preceded the larger gathering. Thus, meeting together on their common mission, Asian Christians were keenly aware of their involvement in and responsibility to Asia's revolutionary society. They acknowledged a common need for help and fellowship. "We can do together what we cannot do separately."

The Asian churches at Prapat fashioned the East Asia Christian Conference and provided it with an interim working committee. Two years later in May, 1959, in Malaya's capital city, Kuala Lumpur, and this time with several representatives from the All-Africa Church Conference, they assembled again. By approving its constitution, they officially inaugurated the EACC that, in effect, had been functioning for two years.

What is the EACC's purpose? To provide a regional base for the more effective fulfillment of the calling of the Asian churches to mission and unity. Without direct organizational ties, the EACC functions under the aegis of the

World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council. It has on its secretariat two Asians and a New Zealander.

The EACC already has greatly encouraged Asia's churches in their mission. They have been sending out an increasing number of missionaries. Even though funds still come from the West to help, Asian churches have steadily increased their giving. This is part of our ecumenical advance.

#### NEW PATTERNS OF MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

For years Christian missions operated as a one-track affair. Missionaries went from the West to the East. Then came two-way movement over the one track. The non-Western churches sent occasional ambassadors to Western churches.

Today this two-way movement continues. Constant interchange is necessary. But one track no longer suffices. Hundreds are needed! It is not enough, as it were, that one can get from New York to Chicago and back on the same track. One also needs to get from Chicago to Atlanta, and from Atlanta to Montreal. To extend the analogy, in the Christian world mission a whole network of tracks is now being built. It includes spur-tracks and long distance tracks.

Spur tracks represent missionary outreach close at hand. They exist everywhere and are multiplying with special rapidity in the non-Western world.

#### *African Outreach*

Through the northern Cameroun flows the Faro River. It is not bridged, and during some months, because of the heavy flow of water, land between it and the Nigerian bor-

der is cut off from the rest of the country. A recent survey disclosed neither African Christians nor missionaries in that area. Challenged by the needs of the people living there, the African Lutheran Church of the Cameroun determined to send a mission to this isolated territory. Meeting in general assembly, the church chose two likely candidates and called them to the work if they would go. The two laymen responded, and the church has provided for their support. Such outreach is multiplied many times across Africa.

### *Asian Outreach*

Many Asian churches are sending out missionaries, but one example must suffice. Although its roots spring from India's ancient Syrian Christian community, the Mar Thoma Church lives in the present. Its presiding bishop is a president of the World Council of Churches. It supports throughout India seventeen ashram-missions staffed by 130 missionaries. Often converts are baptized not into the Mar Thoma Church, but into churches already in the area—Anglican, Church of South India, Methodist, or the Church of Christ in Nepal now coming into being.

Wherever they go in India, Mar Thoma missionaries have to learn the local language. They work among people whose cultures differ from their own. They return regularly on furlough to the state of Kerela to renew contact with their "home church." The nearest meaningful parallel to what the Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association is doing is to imagine the Protestant Church in Spain conducting missions in England, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, and Hungary. Although working among fellow Europeans, it would face the problems of a mission in a foreign land.

*Latin American Outreach*

A similar pattern can be seen in Latin America. Churches in one country are sending workers to other lands desperately needing missionaries. Puerto Rican Protestants have labored in the Dominican Republic. Today a Puerto Rican couple works in Paraguay. Supported by funds raised in Latin America, at least nine Methodists from different parts of Latin America are serving in Bolivia. Other and comparable examples could be cited.

*Indian Missionaries Overseas*

To recur to the track analogy, long-distance tracks represent overseas missionary outreach. For some years Asian churches have been sending missionaries overseas to work among their own nationals.

From the beginning of this century to the present, Baptists, Presbyterians, and other Christian bodies in India have sent Indian missionaries to work among the Indians, most of them non-Christian, in Africa. These and other Indian churches also have served Indian communities in Southeast Asia.

India's churches also send missionaries overseas to non-Indians. For some years the Church of South India maintained missionaries in Papua. Since 1958 one Church of South India couple have been missionaries in Thailand. In 1958 the Methodist Church in India launched its overseas missionary society and sent a missionary couple to work among the Ibans in Sarawak. The Church Missionary Society in Britain makes it possible for an Indian missionary to teach in a theological seminary in Uganda.

*Japanese Missionaries Overseas*

In 1956 the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) established its Overseas Mission Department to minister to Japanese, most of them non-Christian, scattered throughout the world. Nearly half a million Japanese live in Brazil. Others are in Bolivia, Paraguay, Okinawa, and elsewhere. A couple from Japan's United Church are at work in Brazil and are supported there by the Methodist Church in Brazil. Another missionary from Japan's United Church is at work in Bolivia and is supported there by the Methodist Church in Switzerland. Other Japanese missionaries are in Okinawa, Taiwan, India, Thailand, and Canada.

*Burman Missionary Outreach*

Burma's Baptist Karens have established twenty Karen churches in neighboring Thailand. They still assist as missionaries if invited from Thailand. In 1957, the Burma Baptist Convention sent a missionary to work on the China border.

*Filipino Missionaries Overseas*

In January, 1957, the Methodist Church in the Philippines received a request for forty-five missionaries to serve in Malaya. Asians want non-Western missionaries! Only token response was possible. A Filipino medical doctor now serves in Malaya and is supported there by funds from the United States. Other Filipinos are in Okinawa and Sarawak and are supported in part by Asian funds.

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines has even more missionaries overseas. There are five in Thailand,

three in Indonesia, three in Iran, one in Korea, two in Hawaii, and two in mainland U.S.A. Philippine sources fully support those in Thailand and Indonesia and partially support the others.

\* \* \*

As we have seen, Korean missionaries are at work overseas. An Angolan serves on St. Thomas Island in the West Indies and is supported locally. In all, well over one hundred missionaries from non-Western churches are in missions *outside their homelands* to make known the Christian gospel.

Thus is developing the new pattern for missionary deployment. No longer is there only a one-way movement from the West. Nor is it only a two-way movement on one track from the churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to the churches of Europe and North America. We live in a day when increasingly the churches are in mission in all the world together.

## chapter 11

### THE CHURCH ON MAIN STREET

The world is broken and in need of healing. Its new physical oneness emphasizes both the interrelatedness of its people and their divisive fragmentation. The Christian understanding of man has always pointed to mankind's interrelatedness. Yet most of what men do denies this fact. Herein man discloses his separation from God.

The life of the church manifests a similar perverse denial that hides its unity. Yet the church *is* one, and in this broken world must live in mission as a community of reconciliation. The church can fulfill its mission—its purpose—only as it makes plainly visible the unity in love that God wills for *all* who are incorporated in it.

In an unheralded way the “great new fact of our era,” the world Christian community, has been emerging. The world pays it little heed. Nor did it note the quiet, obscure birth of the Christ Child. Without the sounding of trumpets, God works through the lives of men to disclose and achieve his purpose. In the Ecumenical Movement the eye of faith begins to discern new evidence of the glory of God's purpose and the power of his reconciling love.

Within the world Christian community, God has drawn men of every nation together across the barriers that divide mankind. In this new fellowship there is respect for diversity. In it—through all the weaknesses of men who are God's instruments—is revealed that unity for which the world so desperately longs. Is it too much to suggest that, in the fullness of time, God is bringing forth a world Christian community? In it the mission and unity God wills for his people are inseparably bound together. Conjoined, and in their most dynamic expression, they give meaning to all that is related in these pages.

"But," someone asks, "what does this mean for my church on Main Street?" Let us answer frankly. For many in First Church on Main Street it probably means very little. Those who read these words will give the real answer.

#### OBSTACLES TO MISSION

For the great majority of church members the Christian world mission and anything associated with it seem remote and of no direct personal importance. The concerns of daily living, hobbies, perhaps local church activities fill their thoughts. A few are hostile to the Christian mission. Many are indifferent to it.

What is more, the usual congregation tends to direct its attention inward upon itself. It does not live and act as though a great good news had been committed to it to be shared with all the world. It acts rather as if the gospel had been given to it for its own well-being and for the benefit of any nearby who may choose to join its ranks. Many pastors reflect this attitude.

Again, the virus of professional evangelism is wide-

spread. The average congregation seems to assume that its evangelistic outreach is the exclusive responsibility of its pastor or of some other paid worker. Yet in the nature of the case the pastor must direct almost his entire attention to his congregation. A disastrous attitude often results. The congregation becomes a body to be served. It no longer lives through corporate and personal evangelism as a body that serves.

Understandably, from such a background many congregations view the support of a particular missionary or mission institution as a worthy extra. A church may be drawn to a project that for it holds some attraction or appeal. If the congregation is large enough and has sufficient additional resources beyond its own needs, it may support a missionary, a student, or an institution. Participation in missions in this fashion represents willingness to finance or enjoy a luxury.

All too often such participation is viewed as a benevolent financial arrangement. No one puts it this way, and despite inadequacies of motivation, much good may be accomplished. Yet the underlying and fatal assumption remains, namely, that congregations participate in "missions" if a sufficiently attractive opportunity exists, and if there is adequate money with which to support that participation.

Mission, however, springs from propulsion, not attraction. Mission results from a divine compulsion that forcibly sends a committed people out into the world to show and proclaim that God loves each man as much as he loved Jesus Christ. A congregation may be attracted to the support of a missionary. But this is very different from saying that it actively is committed to its mission.

Supporting denominational mission boards represents a way many local churches can fulfill that part of the mission that lies beyond their parish. Yet in the average congregation's life these agencies seem remote. Furthermore, the mission of the church often appears to be no more than the outreach of one among several of a denomination's functional agencies. The mission becomes "missions," and both are separated from the local congregation, which is caught up in so many other projects.

As a corollary, many church members infer, and are never challenged in their judgment, that mission is the responsibility solely of those who are interested. The mission thus comes to belong only to enthusiasts. In such an atmosphere it is easy for one to become and remain a church member without ever understanding that church membership, by definition, commits one to world-wide mission, to taking the whole gospel to the whole world.

Finally, one notes that many ministers are wholly unprepared to help a congregation discover its mission. Most of their theological training is not oriented toward an evangelizing congregation that carries the gospel to those outside the church. Moreover, those seminaries that enable a man to gain an understanding of the life of the whole church throughout the world are few. Many ministers, by their very preparation, are hindered in giving a congregation the vision it needs to see its own mission.

Clearly, what we have been saying here is that in the churches the mission and missions have been the concern of a minority, and that among church members generally there exists an inadequate understanding of what the church itself is in its mission and unity.

## THE CHURCH IN ITS MISSION

"As the Father hath sent me, even so I send you." The church was sent into the world to do nothing less than carry on the work and ministry of its Lord. The inadequacy of "missions" as merely one function of the church's life becomes apparent. The church itself is in mission in the world and to the world. To belong to the church means to be part of that mission. The man who has not been made aware of this fact at best has only a partial understanding of the church's true nature.

Has the reader's own congregation seriously asked itself, "What is the church?" Few local churches in North America have asked this question, but many of their sister churches in Europe have. We have seen some of the results. If Main Street's congregations were helped to greater ecumenical awareness, they might discover the important meaning for themselves these new developments hold.

Another question must be raised. "What difference could all this make in First Church on Main Street if one committed and concerned person there—perhaps the reader—took it upon himself to try to bring alive for his congregation the fact that the church lives its life in mission?" The possibilities are unlimited.

## THE COMMITTED MINORITY

In the accomplishment of any great task there is always a tiny committed minority. The great renewals of life in the church have not arisen from well-planned, broadly launched schemes. They have sprung from the dedicated efforts of a few whose spirit and enthusiasm have been con-

tagious. If one really is concerned, let him share his purpose with several others. If a nuclear group takes fire, there is little it cannot do.

A small but committed group could help the congregation to see that it must be in mission and concerned for unity. Why? Because it is part of God's people. Such a group would seek to make clear that one who accepts Christ becomes part of the mission which Jesus Christ entrusted to his followers. Belonging to God's *apostled* people means that one is sent into the world to bear a witness. Some are chosen and sent into far places. Multitudes are chosen and sent, as it were, to bear witness where they are, but with Christian concern for the world at large.

This committed group would also help its brethren in the congregation to see that they and they alone can offer the gospel to the present generation. When those now living without the gospel have passed, there will be no others who can offer it to them. Each generation has sole responsibility for evangelizing (to evangelize is not necessarily to convert) the unevangelized in its own time.

Moreover, the committed minority will help the congregation to see that its mission is also to demonstrate clearly *in its own life* (the mission is always local as well as world-wide) the unity of God's people. That unity, born of God's love and power, comprehends all that separates men, including race, class, and denomination. The calling is not to status, but to humble, obedient witness and service. Even the mission near at hand is never easy. God's people, like their Lord, in fullest obedience may expect to suffer and be thoroughly reviled.

The church has been set in the world to bring every area

of man's life under Christ's Lordship. Those who know its nature acknowledge in the church both man's weakness and God's might. In the alchemy of that knowledge, the burden of the task is transmuted from immobilizing frustration into impelling power.

In its human dimension, the church consists of those who bear witness to the kingdom, yet who being men are still sinners. Those who denounce its imperfections need to be reminded that the church is not the kingdom. With even greater insistence, the church must be reminded that in so far as its sinfulness prevents the world from seeing and acknowledging God's purpose in Jesus Christ and his kingdom, it stands under God's judgment.

Just as the world requires evangelizing in each generation, so too, the church requires conversion and renewal. For those who belong to the committed nucleus, the unconcern of fellow church members for the mission and unity—and these understood in their fullest dimension—of the covenanted people of God cannot be accepted with complacence. That very unconcern is itself a denial of the full Lordship of Christ over their lives and becomes part of that to which the mission is directed.

How is the renewal to come? It will come out of obedient faith, conviction, and prayer. It could come from within the committed group itself. Such a group undoubtedly would meet together for prayer, discussion, and Bible study. It would, among others, consider such questions as "What is the church?" "What is the mission committed to the church?" "What does it mean for the individual church member to be in that mission?" At first glance these may seem to be simple questions. Yet an earnest group willing to

read, study, and discuss it together could spend an entire year exploring that first question alone.

In being open to renewal, a committed group would find much of its strength in prayer. It would pray for consecration, zeal, and enlarged understanding of the mission God has set before it and before the congregation of which it is a part. It would pray for individual persons in various parts of the world who in a special way are engaged in the Christian mission. It would pray for insight into what its calling to mission means in its own parish, city, and nation. It would hold before God the local and larger work of churches of other denominations in that city engaged in the same Christian mission. How often congregations deny their ecumenical commitment by the infrequency of such prayer.

Such a group could encourage its pastor to develop in his sermons the full orb'd meaning of the church's mission. It could ask him to help the congregation gain understanding of the work and witness of the *whole* church at home and around the world. It could request him, in leading the congregation in prayer, to pray specifically for the work in mission of neighboring churches. Praying thus, a people begin to see themselves in a shared mission—a mission that is one.

Such a committed group would encourage a congregation to make vividly clear to its youth the needs of the Christian world mission. Those whom God calls into his service usually are factually aware of existing need. Believing that God sometimes calls persons through the expressed concern of others, they may as a group or through an individual approach a particular youth. He, it can be pointed out, because of his abilities and knowledge, should give heed to

whether these gifts may indicate a divine leading for him into a special work in the Christian mission. If the Spirit can lead the church in the Cameroun so to choose missionaries in this way, it can also lead the church in North America to similar action.

In these and in other ways such a small committed group could do much to revitalize the life of its church and to help the congregation become a Christian community in mission. Idealistic? Impractical? Impossible within the congregation that makes up First Church on Main Street? The gospel itself has been judged foolishness. Such groups as are here described do exist. They have transformed the life of an entire congregation with results of incalculable consequence. This alone should indicate the urgent need for determined commitment within a nucleus in each congregation.

#### CONGREGATIONAL EFFORTS

Such a group obviously does not attempt all things by itself. Indeed, its major effectiveness lies in its ability unobtrusively to encourage existing bodies in the congregation—the men's class, the women's society, the youth fellowship, the young adult discussion group—to see and accept new responsibilities. These undertakings could help to make real the scope of the Christian mission and the role of the entire congregation in it.

#### *Overseas Institutes*

In one such undertaking several congregations could join together. On a city-wide basis, they could provide an annual four-day (or four-week, meeting certain evenings)

seminar institute for those Christian people going out from that city into other areas of the world. Young men entering military service, Christian teachers, businessmen, engineers, stenographers, and others planning to work overseas, and next summer's tourists—for all these, as we have seen, a local overseas institute could achieve much.

### *Foreign Students*

Another effort could be handled co-operatively. Nearly 45,000 foreign students enroll annually in American colleges and universities. Churches near (What is thirty miles today?) a campus can invite overseas students not as once a year speakers, but to share in the regular life of the church. Christian homes can be opened to them all. For the non-Christians this will provide perhaps their first experience in a Christian family. A call or letter to the local dean should yield the names and homelands of foreign students on the campus. Some colleges maintain a program of orientation for foreign students, actively seeking Americans to co-operate in helping familiarize students with American life.

Operating on a much larger scale is the Protestant Foundation for International Students at the University of Michigan. After several years' experience, it was incorporated in 1953. Supported co-operatively by local churches, it provides a full time counselor in a ministry to the university's more than 1400 foreign students, the majority non-Christian. In 1958-59, it also called a Ceylonese pastor with university chaplaincy experience to serve on its staff. There are at least several universities where this kind of co-operative mission could be duplicated. Where fewer are enrolled, a modified ministry should be possible.

*Attitudes*

One important and difficult task lies in helping a congregation to acquire new attitudes concerning the mission and missions. Will a congregation today support a missionary of another country in a third country? Will it leave decisions to national churches, even though this means closing a long cherished institution or project? Will it then continue support for needed new developments? Will it give its blessings to non-Western denominational offspring when they feel led into a church union in their homeland? Will it agree to pooling funds and personnel when necessary and saying, "This is our share in the Christian world mission?" Congregational attitudes can be crucial.

*Interchanges*

Several years ago when the writer was in India, he spoke on the telephone to the congregation in the United States in which he had grown up as a lad. He had been asked in a preliminary letter also to have an Indian Christian friend speak.

The congregation that Sunday morning in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, was emphasizing its missionary commitment. The call was made during the regular worship. The local telephone company provided amplifiers so that all could hear. In Jabalpur, India, it was late Sunday night. As the conversation ended, the entire congregation joined in singing "Blest Be the Tie That Binds." How can one express the feeling that arose in his heart at that moment halfway around the world? The reality of a congregation in mission was made very personal for many.

In a similar employment of modern aids, a North American congregation, through exchange of letters, color slides of motion pictures, and tape recordings, can come to know well a congregation's life in another land. Each church through recordings can share in the worship of the other. Both also can join in expressing their common mission with a third congregation in another land. So important do such possibilities of interchange loom that one mission board has a secretary whose major work is to facilitate this kind of interchurch evidence of common mission.

These are but several suggestions. To those who are alert and imaginative many other avenues will unfold through which a local church as a community in mission may begin to give evidence of its real nature.

#### THE SUM OF THE MATTER

Yet these undertakings do not represent the goal. The end is that every congregation in its own life may respond fully to God's will for it and in that response bear testimony to the apostolic nature of the church of which it is a part. Moreover, an apostolic church is not necessarily one that is hoary with tradition, but one that is in mission to all the world and engaged in that mission with a compelling concern for the unity that belongs to the whole church.

The church in mission exists that the world may know God as he is revealed in Jesus Christ. It represents part of God's agelong purpose in the world.

By dint of happy circumstances, effective leadership, and use of proper techniques it is possible to lead a congregation to where it may be giving one-half of its income to missions. To be sure this is a noteworthy accomplishment. It

will be highly praised. Much good will come from it. Yet of what meaning is it so long as the congregation believes that it is giving to something outside, other than, and beyond itself? *Until a local church realizes that in its total corporate life it is in mission, it has failed to understand its own nature and commission.*

The First Churches on Main Street everywhere tend to think of themselves as fixed and settled largely within the boundaries of their own parishes. Such congregations need to be asked insistently, "To whom have you been sent?" It is only as a congregation in each generation recovers anew its apostolic nature that those responsible for leading its life may find themselves not pushing a program of missions but guiding a congregation in mission.

\* \* \*

We are the church. We are the mission. We are, in the New Covenant, the people of God. We share in his life as we live in his mission.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Portions of this chapter have appeared in the author's *New Day Dawning*, a World Horizons Book, published by World Horizons, Inc., 475 Riverside Drive, Room 972. Used by permission.

## APPENDIX

### MISSIONARY AGENCIES AND MISSIONARIES

<i>Denomination or Mission</i>	<i>Membership</i>	<i>Missionaries</i>	<i>Income for Work (in Millions)</i>
Seventh Day Adventists (DFM-Assoc.)	283,000	2,000	\$12.8
Methodist (DFM)	9,423,000	1,453	14.0
United Presbyterian, U.S.A. (DFM)	2,969,000	1,293	10.7
Southern Baptist (Independent)	8,700,000	1,186	14.2
Sudan Interior Mission (IFMA)	Non-denom.	1,071	2.2
Christian and Missionary Alliance (EFMA)	57,000	822	3.4
Evangelical Alliance Mission (IFMA)	Non-denom.	764	2.5
Wycliffe Bible Translators	Non-denom.	705	1.2
Assemblies of God, Gen. Council (EFMA and DFM-Assoc.)	471,000	676	3.8
United Lutheran Church of America (DFM) (Denom. and Women's Boards)	2,175,000	542	3.7
Presbyterian Church, U.S. (DFM)	830,000	504	3.6

United Church of Christ (DFM)	2,164,000	495	3.9
(Congregational Christian 353)			
(Evangelical and Reformed 142)			
American Baptist (DFM)	1,528,000	407	2.8
Protestant Episcopal (DFM)	2,853,000	395	2.6
United Church of Canada (DOMCCC)	913,000	270	2.5
Christian Churches (Disciples) (DFM)	1,923,000	242	1.5
Lutheran, Missouri Synod (DFM-Assoc.)	2,077,000	241	1.8
Augustana Lutheran (DFM)	550,000	217	.8
Reformed Church in America (DFM)	209,000	158	1.1

The upper portion of this table includes the largest missionary societies in North America. They are ranked according to their number of overseas missionaries. The agencies through which they co-operate are shown in parentheses. These are described in Chapter 6. For comparison, the lower portion of the table includes other large DFM members and the largest Canadian board.

This table is reconstructed from the Missionary Research Library's *Occasional Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No. 10, December 8, 1958, and from *The Yearbook of American Churches*, twenty-seventh annual issue, 1959, edited by Benson Y. Landis and published by The National Council of Churches.

## READING LIST

LEADERS of study groups may order the Friendship Press books listed below from denominational literature headquarters. From these same sources, they may also order *Adult Guide on Into All the World Together*, by Irene Jones, priced at 50 cents, which contains program plans for using *One World, One Mission* and other Friendship Press materials.

Books of other publishers are listed as additional resources. They may be found in bookstores and libraries.

### FRIENDSHIP PRESS BOOKS

Thompson, Betty. *Turning World*. Descriptions of ecumenical projects, with photographs. 1960. Cloth \$2.95, paper \$1.50.  
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## ABOUT THE FORMAT

The text of this book is set in Linotype Caledonia, 10 point leaded three points. Designed by the late W. A. Dwiggins, this face belongs to the "modern" family of type faces and is somewhat similar to Scotch Modern, although more freely drawn than that letter.

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The word "ecumenical," in the special meaning it has for the mission of the church, is a late comer to the field of semantics. A major portion of *One World, One Mission* is devoted to an anatomy of the word within contexts that will clarify it for the average layman and give it new dimensions for theologians and church leaders. The author shows what it means in terms of the work of organizations such as the International Missionary Council, the World Council of Churches, and National Christian Councils. He shows what it means in the continuing forms of denominational co-operation, in acceptance of non-Western churches as equal partners in the mission, and in such illuminating personal experiences as that of Martin Niemoeller when he served as celebrant of the Lord's Supper in Dachau Concentration Camp for fellow prisoners representing four Christian communions.

The author faces frankly the fact that there are still barriers to ecumenicity and still honest differences of opinion as to the nature of the unity we seek. But he is convinced that every local church, using its best traditional insights, must in some way be involved—or cease to be a church.

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